Will Van Patten

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ANOTHER AIR CASTLE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I made a home for the coming birds,
With window and porch and door;
With thatch of straw like a cotter's house,
And moss like a woodbine o'er:

"A dainty nook," so I softly said,
And perched it beneath the eaves,
Away from breath of the icy wind,
In the shadow of summer leaves.

Cotton and tow in its corner laid,
The gold of the honest sun,
As faithfully in its door was left,
As under a greater one.

And then—I waited a day or two;
I thought I should hear the cry
Of an eager crowd, full of rivalry,
Anxious to rent or to buy.

But not a bird to the cottage came—
The obstinate, vexing things!
Though over my table and hand and book
Fell shadows of flitting wings.

The blue jays laughed at my lure of crumbs;
The wren, with a short remark,
Just settled down on a knotty bough
For its ant-enlivened bark.

The sparrows built by the far-off barn,
Yet came, pert as crows, across,
To pick the thread from my thatch away,
And filch all the tow and moss.

They fought and tattered the roof aside;
The wind round the corner blew
Until the house was a ragged wreck,
From which all the song birds flew.

* * * * * * *

Well, it's only a castle in air after all!
I've built them by scores before now,
And they never were taken, but crumbled away
Or vanished, I could not tell how.

Yet though, in the shadowy vale of the past,
Lie tumble-down turret and wall,
I'll build in the air other castles, I know,
And shut up my eyes when they fall.

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,
AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

BLUE JACK PURSUES HIS INQUIRIES.

Gay Heber seized the first opportunity to inform her adopted brother of the particulars of her singular interview with the false Lieut. Fallon. The young couple were seated by the low embers of their small fire, eating their supper, and were a little apart from the general camp, when Gay related to Mark the startling inquiries of the disguised Blue Jack, and described his singular agitation upon hearing her name.

"I told him to speak to you, Mark," she said, "but my heart has been on fire ever since. What if he should have known my mother? Do I look as my dear mother did, Mark?"

"You have your mother's brown eyes and her black hair," replied Mark; "but when she came to our house she was thin and guant, with wild and hungry eyes that looked twice the size they should have looked. She muttered to herself continually, but the only words we could distinguish were, 'My poor dead boy.' 'My lost and murdered darling.' She never told her name, and she used to call you Gay, yet I have seen her fold you frantically in her arms and call you Gabrielle, and say that she must fly with you to save you from your brother's fate."

"I had a brother, then?" sighed Gay. "What do you suppose was his fate, Mark? He must have been a mere child. Who could have murdered him?"

"It was probably a hallucination on the part of the poor demented woman," said Mark gravely. "Yet it was deep-seated as life itself. I remember that a neighbor once came to our house whom she had not seen before, and whose face was marked with a peculiar scar. At sight of him, your mother flew into a state of the wildest excitement, and shrieked that 'Edmund was come to kill little Gabrielle, as he had killed her boy.' And she ran with you up into the low garret, and crouched in a corner there all day, with you in her arms, and not all my mother's persuasions could bring her forth. But when night came, and you set up a baby wail of hunger and fear, her love for you, which had survived the wreck of reason, made her creep down the ladder and join us in the kitchen. She grew wilder after that, but she never spoke of 'Edmund' again, except when she saw our neighbor with the scarred face. The sight of him almost invariably roused her to fury. I imagine that 'Edmund,' whoever he was, had a scarred face."

"Who was 'Edmund' do you think, Mark?" asked Gay.

"Perhaps he was her husband," said Mark hesitatingly. "She never mentioned any name but Edmund, except, when she was dying, she muttered the name of 'Eldridge.' Perhaps her husband's name was Edmund Eldridge."

"I hope not," cried Gay. "Her horror of 'Edmund' has infected me. He cannot have been my father. If he was, I pray Heaven I may never meet him on this earth. He broke my mother's heart, I know, and I will never call him father. By what name did you call my mother during her stay with you, Mark?" the girl added.

"She told us to call her Gabrielle. She said that was her given name, and she would not tell us her last name, as I said. So we called her Mrs. Gabrielle. She was not of our kind," continued Mark thoughtfully. "I have read of stately women, in jewels and satins, with queenly carriage and gait, and I have always thought of Mrs. Gabrielle as the wreck of a womanhood like that. She was more refined than [illegible] more dainty, and crazy as she was, her [illegible]ous manners were a lesson to us all. [illegible]guage was like that in books. I think [illegible] have had every advantage that [illegible]n buy, but that some great shock [illegible] her brain."

[illegible]ed heavily.

[illegible]nother!" she murmured. "If she had [illegible]l! I have a theory, Mark, that her [illegible] used to get drunk, and that when be[illegible]self with liquor he killed my brother. [illegible]he horror drove my mother insane, and [illegible]ed with me, and wandered far, and final[illegible] found a home at your house, where she died. It is only a theory, but it explains what would otherwise be inexplicable."

"I believe your theory is right, Gay."

"I hope I shall never find my father, or that he will never find me," said Gay sorrowfully. "I used to pray to meet him and know him, to feel his caresses, to be a loving daughter to him, but all that is past. I pray we may not meet in this world. And yet, Mark, when Lieutenant Fallon spoke of my resemblance to some one he once knew, my heart leaped up within me, and I longed to ask him the name of his friend. His agitation was more than singular."

"He looked like death when he first saw your face, Gay," said Mark thoughtfully. "It was as if he had seen a ghost. He is a regularly commissioned officer in the army, and is an educated gentleman. The fancy has seized upon me once or twice—what if he should be your father?"

Gay started, and a look of terror gleamed in her eyes.

"Don't suggest such a thing, Mark," she exclaimed. "From the moment I beheld the man I shrank from him. I had an instinctive fear and abhorrence of him. I felt when he first spoke to me as if he were more to me than a stranger, but I dared not put my thought into words. Mark, I am afraid of him. Don't tell him that I am not your own sister. Don't tell him that my mother was crazy. Oh, Mark, dear Mark, don't let him know any more about me than he knows now!"

"I will not, Gay," said Mark soothingly. "He may question me until doomsday, but I will not tell him what he asks. If he is your father, he shall not know that you are his daughter. Trust in me, little Gay. I will protect you."

The promise comforted Gay, who smiled faintly through the gloom that had fallen upon her.

The young pair conversed more at length, while the few embers on the ground died out, and the groups of families broke up, the members scattering in every direction.

As some young people came toward the Hebers, Mark arose abruptly, and went to look after his oxen. Gay packed the remains of the supper into tin pails, to save for the mid-day meal of the next day, and joined the young Whitmans in a stroll along the river bank.

When she returned, the wagons had been formed into the usual park, the animals were gathered into the inclosure, and the emigrants were formed into groups, the men discussing their prospects, their plans and hopes, the women talking of their children, the homes they had left, and the new homes they were about to make.

Gay was about to join Mark, when the false Lieutenant Fallon approached him, offering him a cigar. The young girl paused, not venturing to come nearer. She knew that the pretended officer was about to pursue his inquiries concerning her. Standing at a little distance, she watched the scene, comprehending much of its purport from the glances and gestures of the two men.

"Fine evening, Mr. Heber," said the disguised Blue Jack courteously. "What! You don't smoke? Smoking is a vice. I wish I could break myself of it, but the habit grows upon me, as all vices grow. Have you concluded to let off the fellow Burk without further punishment?"

"My account with Burk is closed until he chooses to re-open it, sir," said Mark coldly.

"Ah, yes," said the pretended lieutenant, puffing an airy cloud from his mouth. "You are quite right, Mr. Heber. It's not well to allow a lady's name to be bandied about in camp. Your sister is a lovely child, or girl, I should say. She must be fifteen years old. Is she not?"

Now, in truth, Mark did not actually know whether Gay was nearly fifteen, or whether she had passed her fifteenth birthday. Her looks would have confirmed the former supposition; her womanly character, her bright thoughtfulness, her keen intellect, went far to render the latter theory the more probable. He answered, however, with quiet assurance:

"She is but a child yet, lieutenant—only fourteen—yet she is more womanly than many girls of eighteen."

"Only fourteen," said the pretended lieutenant musingly. "I—I had a fancy that she was fifteen. I knew a child once—perhaps she's dead now—but if she were living she would be fifteen years of age, and the very picture of your sister. And, oddly enough, that child's name was the same as your sister's—Gabrielle!"

Mark repressed a start, and turned away his paling face from the keen scrutiny of the scheming villain.

"The child I alluded to," continued the false lieutenant, knocking off the ashes of his cigar upon one of the metal buttons of his coat, "had black hair and brown eyes; rather a singular combination; but her mother, poor creature, had had the same features, and had been a great beauty in her day. She was a New York belle, la belle Gabrielle! But she went insane, and wandered away with her child and was never heard of more."

His glittering black eyes shot forth eager and restless glances of inquiry, but Mark's face was still averted, and he read no answer to his suspicions in the boy's manner.

"If you had seen the New York dailies of thirteen years ago," resumed the false lieutenant, with perceptible eagerness, "you could not have failed to notice a striking advertisement offering a thousand dollars reward for information of the whereabouts of an insane woman and her child. The reward was afterwards increased to five thousand dollars. Detectives were set to look for her, and their opinion was that the woman had drowned herself and her child in the North river, though the bodies were never found. It was a strange thing, that disappearance. Did you never hear of the advertisements, Mr. Heber?"

"Never," said Mark. "How should I have seen it?"

"Ah, yes; true. You were but a boy at the time. Yet if you lived near New York, you might have heard of the disappearance."

"I did not live near New York."

"Why, the conductor told me you came from York State," said the false lieutenant.

"So I did," responded Mark.

"May I ask from what part?" inquired the villain, full of suppressed excitement.

"Certainly," said Mark. "I come from the western part of the State. May I ask the name of the lady whose disappearance called forth the advertisement of which you speak?"

"Her given name was Gabrielle," said the pretended officer evasively. "As to her last name, if you never saw her, that don't matter. I cannot open an old wound for the sake of gratifying a merely passing curiosity. I am not a rich man, Mr. Heber, but if I could get a trace of that insane woman and her child, I would give a thousand dollars out of my own pocket. Think what a start in life that sum would give a young man like you!"

He bent his head toward Mark, and his glittering eyes, glowing like a serpent's, looked straight into those of the youth. In his eagerness, something of the blackness of his soul, something of the hideousness of his purposes, were betrayed in his basilisk glance. Mark shrank back, as from the touch of an embodied pestilence.

"I can give you no assistance in your search, Lieutenant Fallon," he said coldly. "I should think it would be difficult to find the persons you seek, after the lapse of so many years."

"Permit me to ask if Miss Heber is your own sister, born of the same parents as yourself?" demanded the pretended officer abruptly.

In spite of his keen self-control, Mark could not avoid a sudden change of countenance, which the other did not fail to mark.

"I do not tolerate any intrusion into my private family affairs, Lieutenant Fallon," said Mark haughtily. "My sister has already been annoyed by your questions in regard to her history, and I must request you to leave us alone. The name of Gabrielle is by no means uncommon, and I can hear no further remarks upon the coincidence of name between my young sister and some child you knew years ago. I desire you not to address Miss Heber again upon this subject."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Heber," said the villain, adding maliciously, "I see this is a sore subject with you. You have not said that Miss Heber is your own sister. I presume you cannot say so truthfully."

"We will not discuss the matter, sir. Gay Heber is my sister, and while I live she shall not lack for a protector."

"Ah, yes," said the pretended officer, using his favorite phrase of assent. "Brothers are not usually so devoted to sisters as you seem to be, Mr. Heber. I notice that you have no eyes for the Knox and Halsey girls, and that the pretty Mormon girls might be squaws for all that you look at them. And to-day, when young Will Whitman made sheep's eyes at Miss Heber, you flushed up redly, and looked at him with a jealous sternness that would have become a lover of twice your years. Yes, Mr. Heber, although you may not realize the fact, your devotion to the pretty Miss Gay is more that of a lover than a brother."

Mark's face was red enough now; and the angry sternness of his boyish visage might have awed any man other than the pretended officer.

"I made up my mind when I left home," he said haughtily, "to protect my sister from the attentions of villains and adventurers who throng the western frontier. Any man with a pure heart and pure intentions would commend my vigilance. However you may be pleased or displeased, Lieutenant Fallon, I shall redouble my care of my sister, and you may rest assured, sir, that upon the list of her acquaintances I shall *not* write the name of Lieutenant Fallon. Permit me to wish you a good-evening."

With a proud, stern face Mark walked away to join Conductor Landford.

Gay saw him depart, and with a new idea in her little head climbed up into the front of her wagon, and disappeared under the capacious canvas.

The discomfited villain saw Gay thus vanish, and he sauntered near the wagon, and presently, as he came abreast of it, he paused, and leaned against the hind wheels.

A succession of rustling sounds came from within the wagon. Gay appeared to be opening a trunk.

"I mean to see her again," he thought. "I can't sleep until this question of her identity is settled. She must betray the secret—if she has a secret—to me."

The occupation of Gay at that moment interested him more deeply than he knew.

The young girl had agitated herself deeply upon the possibility that the disguised villain might be her father. There were certain articles in her possession, as has been said, that had belonged to her mother, and which the kindly Hebers had refused to appropriate to themselves in payment of the insane lady's board during the last months of her life, or her burial after death. There were some trinkets too upon the person of the baby Gay, and these had been carefully treasured for her. All these precious relics were now deposited in a box in the deep tray of the girl's trunk, and Gay was about to examine them, in the hope of finding something to refute or verify the terrible suspicion that the pretended Fallon was her father.

The long clear twilight was falling upon the plain and river, but within the crowded wagon it was quite dark. Gay lighted a small lantern and suspended it from the front of the wagon, at the top of the canvas, just over the driver's seat. She had arranged a curtain outside of this, to obtain a proper privacy at night, and she now drew it, shutting in the ruddy glare in the confined space with herself.

Then she unlocked her trunk with a key she always carried in her pocket, and took out the small wooden box in which were deposited her treasures.

She felt as much alone as she could have done in her low small chamber at the Heber farm-house, on the banks of the Seneca Lake, in the far state of New York. Since their first night after leaving Leavenworth, Mark had given up the wagon entirely to her occupancy. It is true he stored his clothing and effects in it, but he slept every night on the ground close at hand, wrapped in his blanket, and he never approached the wagon when the drawn curtain declared Gay's wish for privacy.

Gay opened her box with a tiny key, which was usually worn upon a string around her neck.

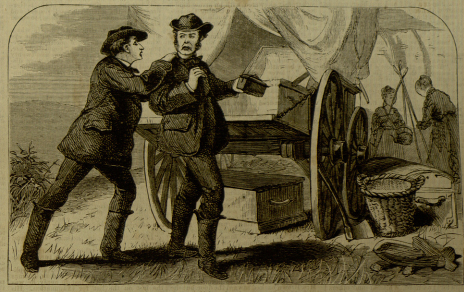
Her treasures lay before her, few and simple, but to her priceless.

There was a worn wedding ring, which Gay took up and turned to the light. There were initials in it, and Gay traced them now for the hundredth time—"E. & G."

"Edmund and Gabrielle," thought the girl. "I wonder if Lieutenant Fallon's name is Edmund. This was slipped from my mother's finger after her death."

She dropped the ring in the box. The metallic clink caught the hearing of the enemy without. With sudden curiosity he drew out his pocket-knife and cut a small slit in the canvas, and cautiously peeped in.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



BURK CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF STEALING BY MARK HEBER.

Gay was in the act of examining a small gold locket which was incrusted with tiny brilliants. Their flash and sparkle caught the villain's gaze.

"Diamonds!" he mentally ejaculated, a livid pallor covering the upper portion of his face. "A little country girl with a diamond locket! Incredible. Gabrielle used to wear one with a cross on one side and a crescent on the other. Can this be Gabrielle's? Oh, if I could only see."

He pressed his face closer to the canvas, his eye peering through the aperture he had made.

The coast was clear for the gratification of his unlawful curiosity. Sounds of music came from the river side at the further end of the camp, and laughter and song blended with the music. Some one was playing a violin, and the young people were dancing to the gay measures, and nearly every member of the train was gathered around to witness the amusement. No one was near the Heber wagon except Gay's enemy, and he had assured himself that no one could see him. With his keen sense of hearing on the alert, he continued to spy upon Gay.

The young girl turned over the locket slowly. Yes, a slender cross in brilliants gleamed like cross lines of fire upon one side of the jewel, and on the other was traced, in drops of diamond light, a bright crescent! The pretended officer could not trace the designs perfectly at the distance at which he stood, but his throbbing heart and starting perspiration told that he believed the locket to be one he had seen before.

Gay touched the spring, and one lid flew open, revealing a picture of two child faces: one of little Gay in infancy, and the other of a boy of some three years, as beautiful as an angel. She looked at these a while, and then touched the second spring, showing a pictured face of wondrous loveliness, painted like the other upon ivory. This was the picture of Gay's mother, taken in all the pride of youth and beauty, before reason had forsaken its throne, and despair and grief and wanderings had made her physically a wreck, as she was mentally.

There was no name upon the locket, and Gay found nothing to confirm or refute her suspicions in regard to the false Lieut. Fallon.

In turning the jewel, the light fell full upon the lady's pictured face, and the spying villain without uttered an involuntary cry, so hoarse and strange that Gay dropped her box in amazement.

In an instant she thrust her treasures back to their concealment, locking the trunk, and hurried to the end of the wagon, and raising the curtain, looked out.

The pretended officer was in the act of moving away from the vehicle. His livid face showed that he had been a spy upon the girl's movements. Their eyes met, and Gay knew that the secret of her treasures, dearer to her than all things else, was known to this villain. He went away without a word.

"If that man is my father," thought Gay, with flashing eyes, "I don't wonder that my poor mother went insane, and ran away from him. He knows of those trinkets in my box. He means to possess them. I read it in his eyes. Once in his hands, he may expect to gain possession of me also. Lieutenant Fallon, you don't know Gay Heber. If you can get my rings and lockets and necklace, you're welcome to them!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A SINGULAR COMBINATION OF EXCITEMENTS.

Our bright little Gay had read the purpose of her enemy aright. He did intend to possess himself of the trinkets, which would go so far to prove her identity in any court of law.

But how was he to gain their possession?

He pondered the question carefully.

With various villainous schemes revolving in his mind, he went down toward the busy scene upon the river bank, and looked at the dancers with an air of interest. Presently he flung himself upon the ground, reclining at full length, and plotted while he plucked handfuls of gay flowers.

Gay went back into her wagon, and remained hidden for some minutes. Then she too came forth, and approached the group of emigrants. She wore a short blue dress, high-topped boots, a thick sacque of gray woolen, and a small round hat, and looked by far the prettiest and most picturesque girl in the camp, as Mark Heber fondly thought when his gaze rested upon her.

Will Whitman, blushing and diffident, asked Gay to dance, and she smilingly assenting, they joined the group of dancers, and went to and fro in the mazes of an old-fashioned contra-dance.

Mark Heber, the false lieutenant remarked, did not look so smiling now. His face grew grave, his manner more repressed, and Conductor Landford, to whom the young man was talking, noticed the sudden constraint in him.

"You were saying, Mr. Heber," said the guide, "that you distrust Lieutenant Fallon. What grounds have you for such distrust?"

Mark could only reply in general terms. He was not willing to narrate the particulars of the pretended officer's interview with Gay or himself.

"You see," said Landford, smiling, "one is apt to take dislikes, and sometimes without reason. I own I don't quite like the lieutenant. He seems a little secret and reserved, and his eyes are not the most pleasant eyes in the world, but he is an educated man, unobtrusive, gentlemanly and courteous; and then he is unquestionably an officer in high favor with his commander, or he would not have been chosen as bearer of dispatches from Fort Kearney to Fort Sedgwick. Your antipathy to him is not reciprocated. The lieutenant talked with Whitman and me to-day about you. It was at supper time, and he told me he admired your energy and pluck in coming West, and he predicted a great fortune for you. He certainly does take a great interest in you. He asked me what part of New York State you came from. I don't know as I ever knew, and Whitman had forgotten. The lieutenant looked actually disappointed because Whitman couldn't tell him."

"The lieutenant takes a lively interest in my affairs," said Mark dryly. "He has since supper asked me the same question."

"Has he? He seems greatly taken with your sister," said Landford. "He asked me the oddest question—if she was really your sister. Of course I assured him that she was. What a little witch she is, Heber! If she were a few years older, and Will Whitman was older, what a fine pair they would make! Whitman is a fine young fellow, Heber, and if he keeps on as he's going you couldn't pick out a better brother-in-law."

Mark's face grew paler, but he made no response. Whitman coming up, he walked away, and stood apart and alone watching the dancers.

Gay came running up to him when the dancing was ended, and remained with him during the remainder of the evening.

At ten o'clock he escorted her to her wagon. She kissed him good-night, as she had done ever since her babyhood, and paused, standing upon the stout whippletree of the wagon, hesitating, yet anxious to unburden her soul to him.

"Mark," she said, "is your revolver loaded?"

"Yes, Gay. It is always loaded. Has the talk to-night of Indians frightened you? It is true we are in the Indian country, but we have a strong party, and we need not fear an attack."

"I'm not thinking of Indians," said Gay—"only of white savages. You and I were talking of mother at supper time, and the idea haunted me that this Lieutenant Fallon might be my father. I had a fancy that I might find out something if I should look over my walnut box, and I went into the wagon and lighted the lantern, and took out the box. I looked the things all over, and suddenly I heard a cry, a sort of groan or exclamation, and I hurried and looked out, and there stood Lieutenant Fallon! He had been spying on me. And I've found a slit he cut in the canvas with his knife. I mended it before I left the wagon."

"The prying hound!" cried Mark. "He must have seen your jewels."

"Of course he did. And he means to steal them, I am sure. He will be along before morning."

"We will be ready for him. Go to bed as usual, Gay, and leave everything to me."

With unbounded faith in her foster-brother, Gay entered the wagon, lowered her curtain, and crept in the darkness to the mattress which lay across the piles of boxes and barrels. But she did not go to sleep.

Mark wrapped himself in his blanket as usual, and lay down under the wagon like a big, faithful watch-dog, apparently asleep, but actually wide awake and on the alert.

The guard that night consisted of one of the Mormons, one of the cattle-raisers going to Texas, and of Mr. Arnold of the Kansas section of the train.

By eleven o'clock the sleep of deep fatigue had fallen upon the camp. The animals slept in their inclosure. Men, wrapped in blankets, lay before or under their wagons in healthy slumber. Women and children were stowed away under the canvas covers, or under the wagons also, and also asleep.

Of all in the camp, but seven souls were awake.

Three of these were the guards. Mark and Gay Heber, the false Lieutenant Fallon and his man Burk, made up the number of wakeful ones.

A little after eleven, the three guards got together for a few minutes' talk. The stars and moon were shedding a flood of light on river and prairie, and the bark of the coyote could be distinctly heard through the stillness. No Indians, or other hostile creature to be feared, was to be seen in the distance, and the guards had no fear of danger proceeding from within the camp, so they chatted together in low tones to beguile the monotony of the watch.

The quick hearing of the false lieutenant revealed to him the condition of affairs. He rolled over toward Burk, and called his name in a whisper.

The man's head was up in an instant.

"What is it, Cap'n," said Burk.

"I want you to do a job for me," said the false lieutenant, in a cautious tone. "Have you been taking more liquor since that affair of yours with the girl?"

"Not a drop, Cap'n. I'm done with drinking so much. I am as sober as a judge."

"That is well. See that you keep so. You know the Heber wagon?"

Burk assented.

"I want you to get something out of it for me. The girl's asleep in it, and Heber is under it. Do you think you can do it? What I want is a small black box in the tray of a trunk at the tail end of the wagon. It's a ticklish job, and perhaps too risky, so I won't urge you against your wishes, if you prefer not to go. With a few false keys to open the trunk, and with a delicate touch-and-go kind of movement, you might do it. The flap at the end of the wagon is buttoned down. A touch would unbutton it. Then the trunk faces the wagon end, and is close to the tail board. The girl has to face it to the tail board, the wagon is packed so close. Otherwise she could never open it."

"It's a ticklish job, Cap'n," muttered Burk. "Then there's the guard."

"You could evade the guard by dropping under the wagon when you hear them coming. I own again, the job *is* ticklish, but then I've known you to rob a wagon while it was travelling under the close watch of the driver. The boys call you 'Light-fingers,' and you've earned the name. I'm anxious to get the box, terribly anxious. If you should get it for me, I'd make it worth your while, Burk."

"I'll reconnoitre," said Burk. "If I can't get it now, I may be able to get it to-morrow night, when the girl's out dancing and the boy is busy. Better try for it at meal-time, don't you say so?"

The pretended lieutenant was very anxious to get possession of the box, and very reluctant to wait. Burk crept away under the wagons on a reconnoitering expedition, but soon returned, scrambling upon all fours, and coiled himself up anew in his blanket.

"No use to-night, Cap'n," he whispered. "I stumbled over a man out yonder, and he's waked up, calling the guard. And here comes one of the guards this way. The jig is up for to-night!"

The guard appearing, Burk pretended to be asleep.

The temporary disturbance was soon quelled, but Burke made no further attempt at robbery that night.

Long before morning, Gay and Mark were sleeping soundly.

At daybreak, as usual, the camp was astir.

Mark made the usual morning fire. The only wood at hand was cedar, and the fragrance of this wood soon pervaded the camp, mingling with the odors of steaming coffee and frying ham.

The fires were all made at a little distance from the wagons. The cattle were let out from the inclosure, and allowed to graze or drink from the river, under the superintendence of a few boys.

It was scarcely light, and the gray shadows of the cool morning twilight still lingered all around the camp, shutting out all distant view. Gay and Mark were at the distance of a few yards from their wagon, and were busy in the preparation of the morning meal.

The false Lieutenant Fallon strolled toward Burk carelessly, and whispered, as he passed him:

"Now's your time! Everybody's busy. No one will see you. Put the box in Hart's wagon till night, and then I'll take charge of it."

The pretended officer sauntered on toward the Whitman group without waiting for a reply.

The circle of wagons had been broken up, and the "prairie schooners" were grouped about in confusion. The opportunity seemed favorable to Burk, and he passed around to the side of the wagons distant from the Hebers, and with his hands in his pockets, and whistling a tune, he sidled up to the Heber vehicle.

Here he paused and looked about him, still whistling.

No one seemed to notice his movements. Every one was busy with breakfast. A robbery was unprecedented in the train, and scarcely any one, seeing Burk there, would have suspected his errand.

The flap of canvas at the back of the wagon came smoothly from the top, and was buttoned to hooks in the tail board. Burk came up behind the vehicle and deftly unbuttoned the lower end of the flap.

The trunk, a simple, large-sized box, covered with sheepskin, strengthened with strips of hard wood nailed on lengthwise, and provided with a stout lock and straps, stood close to the end of the wagon, and the lock faced Burk. The straps hung loosely, as if the trunk had been opened that morning.

Burk drew out from his pocket a bunch of skeleton keys, and fitted one to the lock. The bolt turned. He lifted the lid.

There before him, in the deep tray, was the small black walnut box of which he was in search.

He put out his hands to grasp it, and in the same moment a hand was slapped heavily upon his shoulder!

Wich an involuntary yell, Burk leaped backward.

The hand on his shoulder tightened its grip. With another yell of terror, Burk recognized in his captor the owner of the wagon, young Mark Heber!

The ruffian tried to break away, and a scuffle ensued, which brought a throng of people to the scene; Conductor Landford, Mr. Whitman and the pretended Lieutenant Fallon being among the first to arrive.

Before any question could be asked, the youth had backed Burk up against the end of the wagon, and held him there in a grip of iron. Then he cried out in his ringing voice:

"Conductor Landford, I have caught this man in the act of robbing my sister's trunk. I accuse him as a thief and a robber, unfit to associate with decent people."

"Caught in the act!" cried Whitman.

"It seems to me that our young friend Heber has lots of trouble," said the pretended Lieutenant Fallon maliciously. "If Miss Heber chooses to leave her trunk wide open, who can blame a man for looking into it? But if he so looks, it's no sign he's a thief."

"The trunk was closed and locked," said Mark. "You see the fellow's bunch of false keys sticking in the lock. He's a thief, and was caught in the act of robbing. I don't know of how long date your acquaintance with the fellow may be, Lieutenant Fallon," continued Mark hotly, "but I believe you have instigated him to the deed. I accuse you as his aider and abettor."

A cry of incredulity rang through the crowd.

"Don't talk so at random, Heber," cried the conductor. "The lieutenant has nothing to do with this scoundrel."

"You don't know what you say, Mark," cried Whitman.

"I do know what I say," repeated Mark firmly and coolly, though his eyes flashed. "I don't know the connection between Fallon and Burk, but there *is* a connection, and I again accuse Fallon as the author of this robbery! Burk is only his instrument."

A dozen voices entreated Mark to take back his words.

The giant figure of the false lieutenant, towering above all others, strode through the crowd, and the villain dashed his fist full in Mark's face, as he cried out:

"I don't allow myself to be insulted with impunity. Let that teach you discretion, my young friend."

Mark leaped backward like an enraged lion. A heavy ox whip lay on the ground. He picked it up in a flash and brought it across the villain's face, cutting a long livid streak across the eyes and forehead.

A dozen men rushed in between the combatants.

Conductor Landford, Whitman and others held Mark. The pretended lieutenant, foaming at the mouth and glaring like a tiger, was held by equally powerful hands.

No one had eyes or ears for anything but this exciting scene, and it thus happened that a small body of horsemen in the uniform of the United States had come up, and had dashed into the very camp before their approach was noticed.

A loud bugle call from the head of the troops was the first token the emigrants received of the new arrival.

In a moment the combatants were loosed, and all eyes turned to the new-comers.

The disguised Lieut. Fallon looked and turned faint. He knew what this visit meant, if no one else did.

"Conductor," shouted the leader of the troop, "we are here in search of Blue Jack, the noted desperado, accused of the attempted murder of Lieutenant Fallon of the United States army, whom he brutally attacked and flung into the Deep Canyon as dead. The lieutenant is now at Fort Kearney, in a critical condition, and we demand his would-be murderer!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MAJOR KELPITT'S VALENTINE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Phe-e-e-ew! how cold it is!" said Major Kelpitt.

For a whiff of the biting February blast had seemed to come into the house with him, and insinuate itself under his collar binding, and into the convolutions of his scarlet ears, even after he had unwrapped his fur muffler, and stood warming his chilled palms before the green and purple spirits of the anthracite heaped grate.

"Seasonable winter weather!" muttered the Major. "But there's no denying that these open grates are a confounded humbug; back frozen—nose scorched. If ever *I* keep house—"

And as the Major whirled around on one foot to lay his fleece-lined gloves on the table, he caught sight of a small square envelope lying close to his malachite inkstand.

"No direction on it, eh?" said the Major, taking it up between his finger and thumb. "Another bill, I suppose; it does seem as if there was no end to paying out money."

He twisted his mouth and eyebrows into a distasteful grimace, as he opened the unsealed document.

But, strange to relate, instead of a bill, it was a dainty sheet of tinted paper, margined round with an embossed wreath of lilies of the valley in silver, and containing in its centre a filagree nest of silver and pink, wherein reposed the most infinitesimal of Cupids, with his bow and arrow. And beneath were written the words:

> "DEAR HARRY: I may as well break the ice between us, since you seem determined not to do it. To-morrow is the day sacred to the saint of true love. I dare say you will laugh at the idea, but I always had a superstition about dear old St. Valentine. I shall be at the parlor window at eight to-morrow morning. If you care for me, you will meet me there, and one glance, one touch of your hand, will set my heart at rest.
>
> "Devotedly, your ELSIE."

Major Kelpitt, not being gifted with the poetical complexion that admits of turning pale and red daisy-fashion, became first mahogany color, then tallow candle tint, about his nose and temples. Elsie Vaughan, the beautiful young girl who sat opposite to him at the breakfast table, to write thus to him! Elsie Vaughan with the deep blue eyes, limpid and long-lashed, like a forest pool reflecting the sunshine, and edged round with rushes! Elsie, whose fresh cheeks were round as peaches, and red as the fairest damask rose!

"Upon my word," gasped the Major, "this is most extraordinary—most gratifying, as well. I'd like to know how she knew that my name was Henry Clay Kelpitt. 'Harry!' Nobody has called me Harry since poor old Aunt Tribulation died. And how could I be expected to break the ice, when it never occurred to my mind that she could fancy such a tough old bachelor as I am. Old Mousewell used to say that there was no accounting for the freaks of a pretty girl, and I begin to believe old Mousewell wasn't such an inaccurate judge of human nature. If it had been Petronella Smith now—"

And the Major shrugged his shoulders as he thought of poor, faded little Miss Smith, who occupied the back room up stairs, and gave lessons on the guitar for a livelihood. He knew well enough that Petronella was far more suited to his five and forty years, and his rotundity of girth; he suspected, moreover, that Petronella had a secret liking for him, down in the depths of her innocent, patient little heart. But what man is disinterested enough to bite into the side of a wrinkled winter russet, no matter how well preserved, if there is a golden August apple, just ripened by the summer's sunshine, and still fragrant with dews and showers, hanging within his reach?

"A very graceful way of telling me she is in love with me," said the Major to himself complacently, stroking his iron gray beard, "and not unwomanly either. Will I be there? Of course I'll be there, if I have to crawl on my hands and knees! And—what am I wasting away my time for in this sort of way, when the letter ought to be answered the first thing!"

And catching up his hat and muffler, and tying his overcoat round his neck, by the sleeves, in a peculiar fashion, the Major rushed down stairs and out of doors, to buy something that should fitly express the melting mood of his mind.

"I want a Valentine," said the Major, bouncing into the first stationery store he came across.

"Comic one, sir?" said the portly female behind the counter.

"Do I *look* like a comic Valentine, ma'am?" savagely enunciated the Major. "Of course not. The prettiest you've got."

"That'll be five dollars, sir."

The Major laid down a bill, and went triumphantly off with a gorgeous net-work of gold and white, with a fat flesh-colored heart barbarously skewered with an arrow hidden beneath its mazes, and containing the most poetical motto that money could buy; while the portly female looked after him, with a smile.

"He's an old un for the sentimental dodge," she reflected, and then forgot all about it in the excitement of selecting two "comics" for a servant-maid and a dress-maker's apprentice.

In the mean time the Major went home, and wrote beneath the jingle of "hearts and darts," "loves and doves," "roses and reposes," the five words, "Dearest, I am ever yours," with the signature in a fine round commercial hand, "H. C. KELPITT."

Then he went out a second time, and invested a hundred dollars in a solitaire diamond ring.

"It's best to lose no time in clinching the bargain," said Major Kelpitt to himself.

He was just tying the ring up in a paper parcel, so as fitly to accompany the Valentine, when there sounded a knock at his door.

"Come in," quoth our hero, thrusting the love signals under a pile of newspapers, and looking rather sheepish.

It was Mrs. Brown, the boarding-house keeper, very red in the face and flurried.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Major!" said she; "but I've left the wrong letter here."

"The wrong letter?" repeated the astounded gentleman, rubbing his nose dubiously.

"Yes, sir—a note from Miss Vaughan. I was to give it to Mr. Harry Ellgrove, up stairs—a lover's quarrel, you see, sir—and what with the landlord's bill coming in, and that owdacious cook getting drunk and giving warning, and Matildy breaking the best china pitcher, at one and the same time, I don't know as I can be blamed for leaving it in your room, instead of the laundress' account, as I've got somewhere in my pocket." And Mrs. Brown fumbled blindly in the folds of her rusty black alpaca dress as she spoke.

"Ma'am," burst forth the Major, "go to—Halifax with your laundress' account!"

Mrs. Brown backed toward the door, but she still feebly held out her hand, and Major Kelpitt, tasting the full bitterness of disappointment, gave up the little note that had set his middle-aged heart to bumping against his breast after such a juvenile fashion.

He sat down ruefully before his fire, when Mrs. Brown had departed.

"So it was a mistake, after all," he reflected, with one hand on each knee, and glaring savagely at the back of the grate. "Life is a mistake, it seems to me. *I* am a mistake. And nobody cares for me, after all!"

Nobody! Ah, Major, Major, you had forgotten poor little Petronella Smith!

"Except—well—may be; I don't know. But she's a dear soul, Petronella is—worth a dozen silly, quarrelling girls of eighteen, like Elsie Vaughan. And it's a pity that the five-dollar Valentine and the diamond ring should be wasted."

Major Kelpitt rang the bell.

"Jane!"

"Sir!" said Jane, the chamber-maid.

"Take these parcels to Miss Smith's room; and, Jane—"

"Sir?"

"Here's a quarter for yourself."

"Yes, sir," said Jane, all smiles.

And away she went, in her youth and prettiness a fit envoy for the little winged god with the quiver full of arrows.

Petronella and the Major were married in the spring, just as Harry Ellgrove and the blue-orbed Elsie were in the sackcloth and ashes of their third quarrel.

"Ten to one that engagement never will come to anything," said the Major to his wife. "I detest such fickle characters."

"So do I," said Petronella, who always subscribed to her husband's opinions, as a dutiful wife should. "And you're *sure*, Harry, I am the only woman you ever, *ever* thought of marrying?"

"Yes, my dear," the Major answered stoutly, "quite sure."

Perhaps he believed it. Who knows?

A REMINISCENCE OF BILLY GRAY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

I know of but one historic "Billy Gray." He was the most successful merchant of his time. Born of parents poor and humble, in the town of Lynn, Mass., he was apprenticed at an early age, and when he had reached his majority he stepped forth into the world with only a good name to recommend him, and a firm will to do right and to deal justly to sustain him. He established himself in business in Salem, and in five-and-twenty years he was the wealthiest man in the town—a town in which there resided the heaviest merchants of the State. From a trouble with his townsmen, wherein he felt that he had been purposely slighted and grossly abused, he removed to Boston, taking his property and his business with him. From political reasons they had refused, by vote, to promote him to the office of selectman in Salem; but shortly after his advent in Boston he was elevated to be Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts. And from the time of Billy Gray's departure from Salem may be dated the decline of the foreign commerce of that town. She had been the monopolizer of the East India trade; but when Gray took his stocks and his ships to Boston he took with him the impulse which was to change the base of the India and Chinese traffic.

Of the many curious and entertaining stories told of Billy Gray, I will relate the following, which was recently given me by one who knew him well:

While Mr. Gray was in Salem, and after he had become the heaviest business man in the place, he desired an apprentice for his counting-room—a youth who should come with the desire and will to be a merchant, and who should possess such qualities as would fit him for a confidential clerk and correspondent when the time of need should come; for the merchant had made it a rule to bring up those employees who were to be most sacredly trusted under his own eye. Accordingly he advertised his want, and appointed a time when he would receive applicants.

Over in Beverly lived a widow named Atherton, who had been anxious to obtain a situation for her son, a bright-faced, fair-haired boy of fifteen. She was very poor, and felt that she could keep her child no longer at home. She gained knowledge of Mr. Gray's want, and bade her son apply for the situation.

"But," said the lad, trembling, "I dare not go there. He wants an apprentice for his counting-house—an apprentice, not to a trade, but to the profession of merchant. The sons of rich men will apply. I should stand no chance."

"Don't be frightened, Thomas. Remember that Mr. Gray was once as poor as we are. He will judge the applicants for this place by their merits, and not by the standing of their friends. At any rate, it cannot hurt you to apply. You are not afraid of Billy Gray?"

"No, mother," replied the boy, proudly lifting his head, "I am not afraid of the man,—I fear no true man,—but I shrink from an attempt which is almost sure to result in failure. And again, I know that the sons of more prosperous people will be there; for this advertisement carries in its intent the idea that the apprentice selected is to come up in the merchant's sanctum—within his private office. Look at my clothes. They will laugh at me."

"My boy, I have seen Billy Gray dressed in shabbier clothes than are those you now wear. If you would please your mother, go."

And Thomas Atherton went. Arrived at the office of the merchant he found a score of applicants for the place advertised; and, as he had anticipated, among them were sons of families standing high in the social scale.

These scions of prosperity looked down upon the son of the poor widow, and stood apart from him; and they seemed to wonder how one so low had dared to aspire to the position they held in view. Thomas felt uncomfortable, but the sneering glances of the better-dressed youths aroused his self-respect, and he was determined, come what may, to stand his ground.

By and by Mr. Gray entered. He was a small, wiry, pleasant-faced man, with an eye which, as one who once merited his reproof afterward remarked, "could look fire, or look daggers." There were one-and-twenty applicants in all. Eight of these were dismissed upon sight. Of the thirteen remaining the merchant selected seven for examination that day, bidding the other six to present themselves at the same hour on the morrow.

Thomas Atherton was one of the last named; but since he had not been peremptorily discharged, as some had been who had appeared in far more tidy and fashionable guise than he could afford, he resolved to bear up to the end; and he went away to call again on the morrow.

The first boy selected from the retained seven was the son of parents well-to-do in the world. Mr. Gray examined him in those branches of education most in use in general business affairs, and when this had been done he took him into a room where there was a table with pen, ink and paper upon it, and gave him a short bill of lading to copy. He then went out, and closed the door behind him, leaving the lad to perform his task by himself.

Half an hour afterward the applicant was recalled, and he presented his copy. The merchant ran his eye over the freshly written page, and told the lad he might depart.

"If I want you again," he said, "I will send for you."

And after that the other six were examined in the same manner, and were, in turn, in like manner dismissed.

On the following day the six deferred applicants presented themselves, and as Thomas Atherton had been the last to apply, he was the last on the list for examination. His five companions had been disposed of, he knew not how—for they did not come back through the private office—when he was summoned.

Thomas had been a diligent and studious boy at school, and in geography, history, grammar and mathematics he proved himself efficient. After this the merchant took him into the adjoining room, where was the table, with the pen and ink and paper, and gave to him an invoice to copy, and then left him, remarking, as he turned away, that he had business to attend to, and that he—the boy—must make himself comfortable until called for.

The invoice was a short one, and Thomas was not long in copying it. After he had done this he leaned back in his chair, and looked around. The apartment was a small one, with a bare floor, and scantily furnished; and, furthermore, it seemed to have been poorly cared for. The two or three wooden chairs were covered with dust, and in one corner was a pile of old books which appeared, from the finger marks upon their dusty covers, to have been recently overhauled. Close by where he sat a broom stood against the wall, and where it rested upon the floor was a pile of dirt and rubbish swept up into a heap and left. As Thomas regarded the unsightly gathering his eye caught the glitter of a bright substance projecting from the dirt. He reached over and poked it up with his finger, and found it to be a silver half-crown. He took it up and wiped the dust from its bright surface, and then laid it upon the table, placing it upon the invoice which he had received to copy. The proceeding had been a very simple one. He had picked up the money as he would have picked up a bit of iron which he supposed might be of value to its proper owner, but could be of no value to him.

Very shortly after this Mr. Gray reëntered the room, and Thomas gave him the copy he had made. The merchant regarded the fairly written page approvingly.

"What is this?" he asked, observing the half-crown upon the original invoice.

"A piece of money, sir, which I picked up from yonder pile of dirt."

"All right," said Gray, putting the silver piece into his pocket, and then folding up the two invoices. "You can return home, Thomas, and help your mother through the remainder of the week. On Monday morning come to me and take your place in my counting-house."

The sudden emotion of joy almost overcame the trembling boy; but he managed to express his thanks in a befitting manner,—his words were few—his beaming face and swimming eyes told it all.

On Monday morning Thomas Atherton appeared at the merchant's counting-house, and commenced his labors. Three years afterward Mr. Gray had come to trust him with private correspondence. Five years thereafter he was promoted to the post of confidential clerk.

One day he sat with his employer in the little room where he had made his first essay in copying the invoice, and he pleasantly referred to the occasion.

Old Gray smiled, and having taken a pinch of snuff from his well-worn silver box, he said,—

"Thomas, I will tell you now what I never told you before. I witnessed every movement you made on that occasion. Through a crack in the partition I was able to gain a view of this apartment, and all it contained. The other applicants had all been in here before you, and I had watched them as I watched you. The examination of the thirteen boys whom I had selected for the final test *cost me, besides my time, just twelve silver half-crowns!* But when, in the end, I had found a lad who, to other eminent qualifications, added that of instinctive truth and honesty, I considered the investment a good one; and I have never regretted it."

And Billy Gray's test stood the wear of time. Thomas Atherton went with him to Boston; and afterward went out as agent to India; and at length he established business for himself, and became one of the strongest and most honored men of the Commonwealth.

* * *

—"Dick," said a master to his servant, "have you fed the pigs?" "Yes, massa, me fed um." "Did you count them, Dick?" "Yes, me count um all but one." "All but one?" "Yes, massa, all but one; dare be one little speckled pig he frisk about so much me couldn't count him."

WIT AND HUMOR.

A WEALTHY citizen of New Haven died the other day, who is spoken of as "one of the most sagacious men in New England." As a proof of his sagacity, we suppose, it is mentioned that when the idea was started, in 1830, of building a railroad from New Haven to Hartford, he said, "I have been watching the stages. I find that the average number of passengers in Hartford and New Haven stages is twenty-seven. If anybody wants to invest $3,000,000 in a railroad between these two cities, I am willing they should go ahead. I won't invest."

AN unsophisticated constituent from West Virginia lately called on his member of Congress in Washington, who, according to custom, shook him warmly by the hand, and said, "Come up to the Capitol while we are in session, and I'll give you a seat on the floor of the House." "Wall, no, I thank you," said the constituent; "poor as I am, I always manage to have a cheer to set on at home, an' I ha'n't come to Washington to set on the floor."

THE Bishop of Oxford, having sent round to the church-wardens in his diocese a circular of inquiries, among which was, "Does your officiating clergyman preach the Gospel, and are his conversation and carriage consistent therewith?" one church-warden replied, "He preaches the Gospel, converses beautiful, but don't keep any carriage."

A NEGRO who was suspected of surreptitiously meddling with his neighbor's fruit, being caught in a garden by moonlight, nonplussed his detectors by raising his eyes, clasping his hands, and piously exclaiming, "Good lord! dis yere darkey can't go nowheres to pray any more without being 'sturbed."

SAID a tipsy husband to his wife, "You need-needn't bl-l-ame me. 'Twas woman that first tem-tempted man to eat forbidden things." "That won't do," retorted the indignant wife. "Woman may have first tempted man to *eat* forbidden things, but he took to *drinking* of his own accord."

A CORRESPONDENT asks why, as w-o-r-k is pronounced wirk, p-o-r-k is not pronounced pirk, s-t-o-r-k stirk, c-o-r-k kirk, and so on to an *irk*-some extent. To which we might retaliate, if to is pronounced too, and do doo, why is not go pronounced goo, and so soo?

"IT is never right to take any one in," said a Sunday-school teacher, who was laying down precepts of morality to his class. "Yes, it is," said a little girl; "my mamma says we should always take in a poor person who comes to our door in a storm."

AS the spring comes on, look out for that celebrated girl with a snake in her stomach, which she swallowed when drinking from a brook, in the dusk of evening, etc. She hasn't failed to put in an appearance, every spring, these forty years.

"ANGELINA, my angel, can you tell me why your lovely eyes are like friends separated by distant climes?" "No, Augustus, I can't. Tell me, oh, tell me why they're thus." "Because they correspond, but never meet."

"HOW shall I sell my horse?" said a jockey to an acquaintance; "his tail came off in less than six hours after I bought him." "Sell him by *wholesale;* for no honorable man will *re*-tail him," was the reply.

"WHAT can be more harrowing to your soul than the thought of wasted opportunities?" asked a teacher of a bright boy. "A peg in my boot harrows my sole more'n anything else," replied the bright boy.

SOME robbers having broken into a gentleman's house, went to the bed of the servant, and told him if he moved he was a dead man. "That's a lie," said he, "for if I move, I'm sure that I'm alive."

"YOU can shorten that stick a good deal, John, as it will bear cutting at both ends." "I don't know about that, Jake; I cut my ditch at both ends, and the more I cut the longer it grew."

A WOMAN'S rights widow, who has paid taxes on her real estate for several years, declares that she will stand it no longer; that she must be allowed to vote or she will burn her house.

ROTHSCHILD is frequently called a financial king. And so he is, his government being an absolute moneychy.

EVEN when men are hotly quarrelling, they are apt to be melee-mouthed in what they say to each other.

WHAT word is that in the English language, of five letters, which, by adding two, becomes shorter? *Short.*

CURRENT ITEMS.

A WILD RIDE TO DEATH.—On Saturday night of last week, a number of boys got a heavy sleigh, and taking it to the top of a high hill near Binghamton, started down the road, with nothing to guide the sleigh, but with two torches in front to warn others of their coming. They shot so swiftly down, that a man coming up with a two-horse team was unable to get out of their way, and the heavy sleigh, with its load of shouting boys, dashed directly into the plunging horses. The collision was terrific. One of the horses and one boy were killed outright. The sleighs were broken to fragments, several boys were dangerously hurt, and all were more or less injured.

JOSEPH RODMAN, a cattle herder in California, had a desperate fight with two grizzly bears, which came upon him suddenly, as he was taking his lunch. He was armed with a navy revolver and a formidable knife, and being a good shot, he gave the bears three balls apiece, before they closed with him. This crippled, but did not disable the ferocious beasts, and a terrible struggle followed, Rodman using his knife with desperate energy, and the wounded bears tearing his clothing and flesh in a frightful manner. The brave fellow came off victor at last, however, but it will be many a day before he will be able to resume his avocation.

A GIRL sixteen years of age, who was at work on a sewing machine in a factory up town, got her hair, which was long and worn in ringlets flowing down over her shoulders, entangled in a swiftly revolving shaft, and before the machinery could be stopped, nearly the whole of her scalp was torn from her head. A surgeon was immediately sent for, who dressed the wound, and the unfortunate sufferer was then taken to her residence.

A GANG of burglars worked all night on a county treasurer's safe in Indiana, used up several dollars' worth of tools, and found ten cents in the secret drawer of the safe. Disgusted with the result, they left a note saying they should not remain longer in that vicinity, but should go into some county where they could at least make enough to keep up their stock of tools and pay their board.

A MAGISTRATE in Cohoes lately attempted to eject a stranger from his church pew by force, and failing in this, he went to his office, made out a warrant, and had an officer arrest the intruder and lock him up. The result is a criminal prosecution against the magistrate for assault, and an action for $2,500 damages for false imprisonment.

ONE day last week a farmer's wife, living near Fort Smith, Ark., heard a loud squealing in the yard back of the barn, and rushing out, she found a large black bear killing a hog. Hastening to the house, she seized a loaded rifle, returned, and shot the bear dead, and gave the family bear steaks for supper.

THE sea is rapidly absorbing Tybee Island, near Savannah. The ravine in which Confederate troops drilled in 1861, is now a salt water pond during high tides, and the bones of Union and Confederate soldiers buried there protrude from their graves, which have been nearly washed away.

AS a music-teacher in New Haven was lying on his bed last Sunday, his wife suddenly appeared, deluged his face with scalding water, and then began to beat him over the head with a saucepan. He at last mastered her, and found that she had gone insane. She was taken to an asylum.

AN adventurer from this city, who went up among the Green Mountaineers of Vermont, to swindle them, a few weeks ago, was detected, and on Tuesday of last week the farmers of Ludlow township tarred and feathered him, and gave him a free ride out of town on a rail.

ONE afternoon recently a little boy five years old strayed from his home in Rockland, Me., and not returning, search was made for him, and the next morning his body was found in the dock, where it seems the little fellow had gone to play with ice floats.

THE British lion—naturalized—which kill Massarti, its keeper, in England a few month has at last died of the wounds inflicted on it attempt to rescue its victim. It was a fe beast, and nearly killed another keeper just it died.

A DEFAULTING Philadelphia officia victed of robbing the city, has been sente three years' imprisonment, and to pay a three hundred thousand dollars. It is dered that he remain in prison till the fine is

A CITIZEN of Providence ran a rusty into his foot on Monday of last week, and died the lockjaw on Tuesday morning.

TOO KIND.

BY ADA ROWENA CARNAHAN.

I pray you do not be so kind,
Or you will break my heart;
Still, at your tender tone, I find
Unbidden tears will start.

The words your pity prompts to, oh,
I pray you, do not speak;
Else might my dim eyes overflow,
For I am very weak.

And should you see me weep, perchance
You would not understand;
And should I say your tone, your glance,
The pressure of your hand

Had been the cause, 'twould give you pain
That I would save you from;
So in your sympathy refrain,
And let your lips be dumb;

And let me still, as best I may,
Smile, though my sad heart ache;
Nor seek to draw the vail away
I *must* wear, for pride's sake.

In vain we trample nature's laws!
Behold me, how I cry!
And should I say you were the cause,
My lips would frame a lie.

And yet unkindness I could bear,
Or cold indifference;
But kindness coming unaware
Finds me without defence.

I told you I was weak; you see
That I *am* weak indeed.
But do not try to comfort me,
Nor give me any heed.

Kind as you have already been,
Would you be kinder yet?
Oh, then, forget this foolish scene;
At least, seem to forget!

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BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "SELF-MADE," "THE BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE LOVE.

Did woman's charms thy youth beguile,
And did the fair one faithless prove?
Hath she betrayed thee with a smile,
And sold thy love?
Live! 'Twas a false, bewildering fire:
Too often love's insidious dart
Thrills the fond soul with wild desire,
But kills the heart.
A nobler love shall warm thy breast,
A brighter maiden faithful prove,
And thy manhood shall be blest
In woman's love.

MONTGOMERY.

Emma Cavendish, with her cheeks blooming, and her eyes beaming with pleasure, ran out to meet her friends.

Alden and Laura Lytton, just admitted by the footman, stood within the hall.

Miss Cavendish welcomed Laura with a kiss, and Alden with a cordial grasp of the hand.

"I am so delighted to see you, dear Laura; and you also, Mr. Lytton," she said, leading the way into the parlor.

"Well as I like my kind relatives at Lytton Lodge, I am very glad to get back to you, Emma, dear, and that is the truth," answered Laura, as she sank into an arm-chair and began to draw off her gloves.

Alden said nothing. He had bowed deeply in response to Miss Cavendish's words of welcome, and now he was thinking what a bright and beautiful creature she was, how full of healthful, joyous life she seemed, and wondering that he had never noticed all this before.

But he *had* noticed it before. When he first saw Emma Cavendish in her father's house in the city, he had thought her the most heavenly vision of loveliness that had ever beamed upon mortal eyes, and he would have continued to think so, had not the baleful beauty of Mary Grey glided before him, and beguiled his sight and his soul.

But Mary Grey was gone with all her magic arts, and the very atmosphere seemed clearer and brighter for her absence.

"As soon as you have rested a little, come up to your room, Laura, and lay off your wraps. Tea will be ready by the time we come down again. And, Mr. Lytton, your old attendant, Jerome, will show you to your apartment," said the young hostess, as she arose, with a smile, to conduct her guest.

They left the drawing-room together.

And while Laura Lytton was arranging her toilet in the chamber above stairs, Emma Cavendish told her the particulars of Mary Grey's departure, and also of the letter she had received from her long estranged relative Mrs. Fanning.

They went down to tea, where they were joined by Electra and the Rev. Dr. Jones.

Miss Cavendish presented Mr. Lytton to Dr. Jones. And then they sat down to the table.

Alden Lytton's eyes and thoughts were naturally enough occupied and interested in Emma Cavendish. He had not exactly fallen in love with her, but he was certainly filled with admiration for the loveliest girl he had ever seen. And he could but draw involuntary comparisons between the fair, frank, bright maiden and the beautiful, alluring widow.

Both were brilliant, but with this difference: the one with the pure life-giving light of Heaven, and the other with the fatal fire of Tartarus.

After tea they went into the drawing-room, where they spent a long evening talking over "old times"—*their* "old times" being something less than one year of age.

And every hour confirmed Alden Lytton's admiration of Emma Cavendish.

The next day Alden Lytton was invited up stairs to the old lady's room and presented to Madam Cavendish, who received him with much cordiality, telling him that his grandfather had been a life-long personal friend of hers, and that she had known his father from his infancy up to the time that he had left the neighborhood to practice law in the city.

And after a short interview the ancient gentlewoman and the young law student parted mutually well pleased with each other.

"A fine young man! a very fine young man indeed! but more like his grandfather, as I remember him in his youth, than like his father, whom I could not always well approve," said the old lady to her confidential attendant Aunt Moll, who had closed the chamber door after the departing visitor.

"Dunno nuffin 'tall 'bout dat, ole mist'ess, but he monsus hansume, dough—umph-um; an't he, dough? An an't he got eyes?—umph-um!"

Alden went down stairs.

"The most interesting old lady I have ever seen in my life, with the balsamic aroma of history and antiquity about her and all her surroundings," he said, as he joined the young ladies in the drawing-room.

"Balsamic aroma of *what?*" inquired Electra, who had no taste for poetry, and no reverence for antiquity. "Young man, it was the dried 'yarbs' she keeps in her closet that you smelled. Besides, antiquity has no other odor than that of mould and must."

Alden blushed, laughed, and looked at Emma Cavendish.

"You must not mind my cousin Electra, Mr. Lytton. She is a privileged person among us. By the way, Laura has told you, I presume, of our relationship," said Emma pleasantly.

"Oh, yes," returned young Lytton, with a smile and a bow. "And I am happy to have this opportunity of congratulating you both."

"Thanks," said Miss Cavendish, with a vivid blush.

"I believe there was some talk about a picnic party to the top of Porcupine Mountain, was there not?" inquired Electra, to cut short all sentiment.

"Yes, my dear, and the horses are ordered for eleven o'clock. It is half past ten now, and we will go and put on our hats and habits," replied Miss Cavendish, playfully rising and breaking up the conference.

The party of young friends remained one week longer at Blue Cliffs, every day deepening and confirming the admiration and respect with which the beauty and the excellence of Emma Cavendish inspired Alden Lytton. But yet he was not in love with her.

Every morning was spent by the young people in riding or driving about through the sublime and beautiful mountain and valley scenery of the neighborhood.

And every evening was passed in fancy work, music, reading or conversation in the drawing-room.

And so the pleasant days of the Easter holidays passed away, and the time for study and for work commenced.

Laura and Electra went away from Blue Cliffs on the same day—Laura escorted by her brother Alden, and Electra by her grandfather, the Rev. Dr. Jones.

As the party were assembled in the front hall to take leave of their fair young hostess before entering the large travelling carriage that was to take them to the Wendover Railway station, Emma Cavendish went up to Alden Lytton and placed a letter in his hand, saying, with a frank smile:

"As you are going direct to Charlottesville, Mr. Lytton, I will trouble you to take charge of this letter to our mutual friend, Mrs. Grey, who, you know, is now staying in that town. Will you do so?"

"Certainly—with great pleasure," stammered Alden in extreme confusion, which he could scarcely conceal, and without the slightest consciousness that he was telling an enormous falsehood, but with full assurance that he should like to oblige Miss Cavendish.

"I hope it will not inconvenience you to deliver this in person, Mr. Lytton," added Emma.

"Certainly not, Miss Cavendish," replied Alden, telling unconscious fib the second.

"For, you see, I am rather anxious about our friend. She left in ill health. She is almost a stranger in Charlottesville. And—this is the point—I have not heard from her, by letter or otherwise, since she left us; so I fear she may be too ill to write, and may have no friend near to write for her. This is why I tax your kindness to deliver the letter in person, and find out how she is; and—write and let us know. I am asking a great deal of you, Mr. Lytton," added Emma, with a deprecating smile.

"Not at all. It is a very small service that you require. And I hope you know that I should be exceedingly happy to have the opportunity of doing any very great service for you, Miss Cavendish," replied Alden truthfully and earnestly. For in itself it *was* a very small service in itself that Miss Cavendish had required of him, and he *would* have liked and even preferred another and a greater, and in fact a different service.

"Many thanks," said Miss Cavendish, with a frank smile, as she left the letter in his hands.

Then the adieux were all said, and promises of frequent correspondence and future visits exchanged among the young ladies. And the travellers departed, and the young hostess re-entered her lonely home and resumed her usual routine of domestic duties.

She was anxious upon more than one account.

More than a week had passed since the departure of Mary Grey, and yet, as she had told Alden Lytton, she had never heard even of her safe arrival at Charlottesville, and she feared that her protegé might be suffering from nervous illness among strangers.

More than a week had also passed since she had telegraphed and written to her Aunt Fanning in New York. But no answer had yet come from that unhappy woman. And she feared that the poor relative whom she wished to succor might have met with some new misfortune.

However, Emma had hoped, from day to day, that each morning's mail might bring her good news from Charlottesville or New York, or both.

And even to-day she waited with impatience for the return of Jerome, who had driven the travelling carriage containing the departing visitors to Wendover, and who might find letters for Blue Cliffs waiting at the post-office.

Emma could not be at rest all that day, partly because she missed her young companions, whose society had made the lonely house so cheerful, and partly because she half expected news with the return of Jerome.

She wandered up and down the deserted drawing-room, and then went up stairs to the chambers just vacated by her young friends, where she found Sarah, the chamber-maid, engaged in dismantling beds and dressing-tables, preparatory to shutting up the "spare rooms" for the rest of the season.

All this was very dreary and dispiriting.

She left these apartments, and would have gone into the old lady's room, only that she knew her grandmother was at this hour taking the first of her two daily naps.

As she turned to go down stairs, she glanced through the front hall window, and caught a glimpse of the travelling carriage, with Jerome perched upon the box, slowly winding its way around the circular avenue that led to the house.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

A SURPRISE.

She ran down stairs briskly enough now, and ran out of the front door.

"Any letters to-day, Jerome?" she inquired.

"No, Miss," answered Jerome, shaking his head.

"O dear, how depressing!" sighed Emma, as she turned to go into the house.

But a sound arrested her steps—the opening of the carriage door. She turned and saw Jerome standing before it, and in the act of helping some one to alight from the carriage.

Another moment, and a tall, thin, dark-eyed woman, with very white hair, and clad in the deepest widow's weeds, stood before Miss Cavendish.

By instinct Emma recognized her aunt. And she felt very much relieved, and very much rejoiced to see her, even while wondering that she should have come unannounced either by letter or telegram.

As for Jerome, he stood wickedly enjoying his young lady's astonishment, and looking as if he himself had performed a very meritorious action.

"Miss Emma Cavendish, I presume," said the stranger, a little hesitatingly.

"Yes, Madam. And *you* are my Aunt Fanning, I am sure. And I am very glad to see you," answered Emma Cavendish. And she put her arms around the stranger's neck and kissed her.

"Dat's better'n letters, an't it, Miss Emmer?" inquired Jerome, grinning from ear to ear, and showing a double row of the strongest and whitest ivories, as he proceeded to take from the carriage various packages, boxes and travelling bags, and so forth.

"Yes, better than letters, Jerome. Follow us into the house with that luggage. Come, dear aunt, let us go in. Lean on my arm. Don't be afraid to lean heavily. I am very strong," said Emma; and drawing the poor lady's emaciated hand through her own arm, she led her into the house.

She took her first into the family sitting-room, where there was a cheerful fire burning, which the chilly mountain air, in this spring weather, made very acceptable.

She placed her in a comfortable cushioned rocking-chair, and proceeded to take off the travelling bonnet and shawl with her own hands, saying:

"You must get well rested and refreshed here before you go up to your room. You look very tired."

"I am very weak, my dear," answered the lady, in a faint voice.

"I see that you are. I am very sorry to see you so feeble, but we will make you stronger here in our exhilarating mountain air. If I had known that you would come by this train, I should have gone to the railway station in person to meet you," said Emma kindly.

Mrs. Fanning turned her great black eyes upon the young lady and stared at her in surprise.

"Why, did you not get my letter?" she inquired.

"No," said Emma. "I anxiously expected to hear from you from day to day, but heard nothing either by letter or telegram."

"That is strange! I wrote to you three days ago that I should be at Wendover this morning, and so, when I found your carriage there, I thought that you had sent for me."

"It was very fortunate that the carriage was there, and I am very glad of it; but it was not in fact sent to meet you, for, not having received your letter, I did not know that you would arrive to-day. The carriage was sent to take some visitors who had been staying with us, and were going away, to the railway station. It is a wonder Jerome had not explained this to you. He is so talkative," said Emma, smiling.

"I never talk to strange servants," gravely replied the lady. "But I will tell you how it happened. I really arrived by the earliest train, that got in at Wendover at five o'clock in the morning. There was no carriage from Blue Cliffs waiting for me at the railway station, and in fact no carriage from any place, except the hack from the Reindeer Hotel. So I got into that, and having previously left word with the station-master to send the Blue Cliffs carriage after me to the Reindeer when it should come, I went on to the hotel to get breakfast, and to lie down and rest. But when half the forenoon had passed away without any arrival for me, I began to grow anxious, fearing that some mistake had been made."

"I am very sorry you had to suffer this annoyance, immediately upon your arrival here too," said Emma regretfully.

"Oh, it did not last long. About noon the landlord, Greenfield, rapped at my door, and told me that the Blue Cliffs carriage had come, and that the ostler was watering the horses while the coachman was taking a glass of beer at the bar."

"Jerome had doubtless taken our visitors to the station, and called at the Reindeer to refresh himself and his horses."

"Yes, I suppose so. Almost at the same moment that the landlord came to my door to announce the carriage, I heard some one else, under my window, saying to the coachman that there was a lady here waiting to be taken to Blue Cliffs. And I went down and got into the carriage with 'bag and baggage.' Jerome, if that's his name, very gravely, with a silent bow, put up the steps and closed the door, and mounted his box and drove off."

"But you must have left some baggage behind."

"Yes, three trunks; one very large. Mr. Greenfield, of the Reindeer, promised to send them right after me in his wagon."

While they had been speaking, Emma Cavendish had touched the bell and given a whispered order to the servant who answered it.

So now the second footman, Peter, appeared with a waiter in his hands, on which was served tea, toast, a broiled squab and a glass of currant jelly.

This was set upon a stand beside Mrs. Fanning's easy-chair.

"I think that you had better take something before you go up stairs," said the young hostess kindly, as she poured out a cup of tea.

Consumptives are almost always hungry and thirsty, as if nature purposely created an unusual appetite for nourishment, in order to supply the excessive waste of tissue caused by the malady.

And so Mrs. Fanning really enjoyed the delicate luncheon set before her, so much that she finished the squab, the jelly, the toast and the tea.

When she had been offered and had refused a second supply, Emma proposed that she should go up to her room, and she took her at once to the beautiful corner chamber, with its southern and eastern aspect, that had been fitted up to receive her.

Here she found that her travelling trunks, which had already arrived from Wendover, were placed.

And here, when she had changed her travelling dress for a loose wrapper, she laid down on a lounge to rest, while Emma darkened the room and left her to repose.

Miss Cavendish went straight to the old lady's apartment.

Mrs. Cavendish was sitting in her great easy-chair by the fire, with her gold-rimmed spectacles on her nose, and her Bible lying open on her lap.

As Emma entered the room the old lady closed the book, and looked up with a welcoming smile.

"I have come to tell you, my dear grandma, that Aunt Fanning has arrived," said Emma, drawing a chair and seating herself by the old lady's side.

"Yes, my dear child; but I'll trouble you not to call her Aunt Fanning," said Madam Cavendish haughtily.

"But she *is* my aunt, dear grandma," returned Emma, with a deprecating smile.

"Then call her Aunt Katherine. I detest the name of that tavern-keeper whom she married."

"Grandma, grandma, the man has gone where at least there can be no distinctions of mere family rank," said Emma.

"That's got nothing to do with it. We are *here* now. Well, and when did Katherine arrive, and where have you put her? Tell me all about it."

Emma told her all about it.

"Well," said the old lady, "as she is here, though sorely against my approbation—still, as she *is* here, we must give her a becoming welcome, I suppose. You may bring her to my room to-morrow morning."

"Thank you, grandma, dear; that is just what I would like to do," replied the young lady.

Accordingly the next morning Mrs. Fanning was conducted by Emma to the "Throne Room," as Electra had saucily designated the old lady's apartment.

Madam Cavendish was dressed with great care, in a fine black cashmere wrapper, lined and trimmed with black silk, and a fine white lace cap, trimmed with white piping.

And old Moll, also in her best clothes, stood behind her mistress' chair.

The old lady meant to impress "the tavern-keeper's widow" with a due sense of reverence.

But the gentlewoman's heart was a great deal better than her head. And so, when she saw the girl whom she had once known a brilliant, rich-complexioned brunette, with raven hair and sparkling eyes and queenly form, changed into a woman old before her time, pale, thin, gray and sorrow-stricken, her heart melted with pity, and she held out her hand, saying kindly:

"How do you do, Katie, my dear? I am very sorry to see you looking in such ill-health. You have changed very much from the child I knew you, twenty-five years ago."

"Yes," said Mrs. Fanning, as she took and pressed the venerable hand that was held out to her. "I have changed. But there is only one more change that awaits me—the last great one."

"Moll, wheel forward that other easy-chair. Sit down at once, my poor Katie. You look ready to drop from weakness. Emma, my child, pour out a glass of that old port wine and bring it to your aunt. You will find it in that little cabinet," said Madam Cavendish, speaking *to* one and another in her hurry to be hospitable, and to atone for the hard thoughts she had cherished and expressed toward this poor suffering and desolate woman.

And Katherine Fanning was soon seated in the deep, soft "sleepy hollow," and sipping with great comfort the rich old port wine.

"Yes, Katie," said the old lady, resuming the thread of the conversation, "that last great change awaits us all—a glorious change, Katie, that I for one look forward to with satisfaction and desire *always*—with rapture and longing *sometimes*. What will the next life be like, I wonder? We don't know. 'Eye hath not seen—ear heard,'" mused the old lady.

The interview was not a long one. Soon Emma Cavendish took her aunt from the room.

"You must come in and see me every day, Katie, my dear," said the old lady, as the two visitors left.

And from that time the desolate widow, the homeless wanderer, found loving and tender friends, and a comfortable and quiet home.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

ALDEN AND HIS EVIL GENIUS MEET AGAIN.

Meanwhile the visitors that had left Blue Cliffs that morning travelled together until they reached Richmond.

The train got in at ten o'clock that night.

There was no steamboat to Mount Ascension Island until the next day.

So the party for that bourne were compelled to spend the night at Richmond.

Alden, although he might have gone on to Charlottesville that night, determined to remain with his friends.

The whole party went to the Henrico House, where they were accommodated with adjoining rooms.

The next morning they resumed their journey, separating to go their several ways. Alden saw the two young ladies safely on the steamboat that was to take them to Mount Ascension, and then bade them good-bye, leaving them in charge of the Rev. Dr. Jones, who was to escort them to the end of their journey.

He had barely time to secure his seat for Charlottesville, where he arrived on the afternoon of the same day.

The letter he had to deliver to Mary Grey "burned in his pocket." He could not have done otherwise than promise to deliver it in person, when fair Emma Cavendish had requested him to do so. And now of course he must keep his word, and go and carry the letter to her, although he would rather have walked into a fire than into that false syren's presence.

It is true that his love for her was dead and gone. But it had died such a cruel and violent death that the very memory of it was full of pain and horror, and to meet her would be like meeting the spectre of his murdered love. Nevertheless he must not shrink from his duty; he must go and do it.

Before reporting at his college, he went to a hotel and changed his clothes, and then started out to find Mary Grey's residence. That was not so easily done. She had omitted to leave her address with her friends at Blue Cliffs, and Emma's letter was simply directed to Mrs. Mary Grey, Charlottesville.

True, Charlottesville was not a very large place; but looking for a lady there, was something like looking for the fabulous needle in the hay stack.

Still he had formed a plan of action to find her. He knew that she pretended to great piety; that she was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and that wherever she might happen to sojourn she would be sure to join the church, and make friends with the clergy of her own denomination.

So Alden bent his steps to the house of the Episcopal minister at Charlottesville.

He found the reverend gentleman at home, and received from him, as he had expected to do, the address of Mrs. Grey.

"A most excellent young woman, sir—an earnest Christian. She lost not a day in presenting her church letter and uniting herself with the church. She has been here but ten days, and already she has taken a class in the Sunday-school. A most meritorious young woman, sir," said the worthy minister, as he handed the card with Mrs. Grey's new address written upon it.

To Alden, who knew the false-hearted beauty so well, all this was surprising.

But he made no comment. He simply took the card, bowed his thanks, and left the house to go and seek the home of Mrs. Grey.

Among many falsehoods, the woman had told one truth when she had informed Emma Cavendish that she had a lady friend at Charlottesville, who kept a student's boarding-house. She had met this lady just previous to engaging as drawing-mistress at Mount Ascension. And by her alluring arts she had won her sympathy and confidence. She was staying with this friend at the time that Alden sought her out.

He now easily found the house.

And when he inquired of the negro boy who answered the bell whether Mrs. Grey was at home, he was answered in the affirmative, and invited to enter the house.

The boy opened a door on the right hand of the narrow entrance passage, and Alden passed into the parlor, and found himself unannounced in the presence of his false love.

There was no one with her, and she was sitting at a table, with drawing materials before her, apparently engaged in copying a picture.

Hearing the door open and shut, she lifted her head and looked up.

Seeing Alden Lytton standing before her, she dropped the pencil from her fingers, turned deadly pale, and stared at him in silence.

Alden, if the truth must be told, was scarcely less agitated; but he soon recovered his self-command.

"I should apologize," he said, "for coming in unannounced; but I did not know that you were here. I was shown into this room by the waiter, supposing that I was to remain here until he took my card to you."

She neither moved nor spoke, but sat and stared at him.

"I have only come as the bearer of a letter to you from Miss Cavendish, a letter that I promised to deliver in person. Here it is," he said, laying the little packet on the table before her.

Still she made no answer to his words, nor any acknowledgment of his service. She did not even take up Emma's letter.

"And now, having done my errand, I will bid you good-afternoon, Mrs. Grey," he said, bowing and turning to leave the room.

That broke the panic-stricken spell that held her still.

She started up and clasped her hands suddenly together, exclaiming:

"No, no, no; for pity's sake *don't* go yet! Now that you are here, for Heaven's sake stay a moment and listen to me!"

"What can you possibly have to say to me, Mrs. Grey?" coolly inquired the young man.

"Oh, sit down! sit down one little moment and hear me! I have not got the plague, that you should hasten from me so," she pleaded.

It was in Alden's thoughts to say that moral plagues were even more dangerous and fatal than material ones; but the woman before him looked so really distressed that he forbore.

"I know that you have ceased to love me," she went on in a broken voice. "I know, of course, that you have ceased to love me—"

"Yes, I am thoroughly cured of that egregious boyish folly," assented Alden grimly.

"I know it, and I would not seek to recover your lost, lost love; but—" Her voice, that had been faltering, now broke quite down, and she burst into tears, and sobbed as if her heart was breaking.

And her grief was as real as it was violent; for she had loved the handsome young law student, and she mourned the loss of his love.

Alden sat apparently unmoved, but in truth he was beginning to feel very sorry for this woman, but it was with the sorrow we feel for a suffering criminal, and totally distinct from sympathy or affection.

Presently her gust of tears and sobs exhausted itself, and she sighed and dried her eyes, and said:

"Yes, I know that all love is quite over between us."

"Quite over," assented Alden emphatically.

"And it was not to renew that subject that I asked you to stay and listen to me."

"No," said Alden gently, "I presume not."

"But, though all thoughts of love are forever over between us, yet I cannot bear that we should live at enmity. As for me, I am not your enemy, Alden Lytton."

"Nor am I yours, Mrs. Grey. You and I can live as strangers without being enemies."

"Live as strangers! Oh, but that is just what would break my heart utterly. Why should we live as strangers? If all love is over between us, and if we are still not enemies, if we have forgiven each other, why should we two live as strangers in this little town? Why may we not meet at least as the common friends of every day?"

"Because the memory of the past would preclude the possibility of our meeting pleasantly or profitably."

"Oh, Alden, you are very hard! You have not forgiven me!"

"I have utterly forgiven you."

"But you cherish hard thoughts of me?"

"Mrs. Grey, I must regard your actions—the actions that separated us—as they really are," answered Alden sadly and firmly, as he arose, and took his hat to leave the room.

"No, no, no; DON'T go yet. You MUST hear me! you SHALL hear me! Even a convicted murderer is allowed to speak for himself," she exclaimed, with passionate tears.

Alden sighed, and sat down.

"You must regard my actions as they really are, you say. Ah, but the extenuating circumstances, the temptations, the motives—aye, the motives!—have you ever thought of them?"

"I can see no motive that could justify your acts," said Alden coldly.

"No, not justify—I do not justify them even to myself—not justify, but *palliate* them, Alden—palliate them at least in *your* eyes, if in no others."

"And why in my eyes, Mrs. Grey?"

"Oh, Alden, all was planned for your sake!"

"For *my* sake? I pray you do not say that!"

"Listen, then, and consider all the circumstances. I loved you and promised to be your wife at that far distant day, when you should come into a living law practice. But I was homeless, penniless and helpless. I had lost my situation in the school, and I had no prospect of getting another.

"The term of my visit to Emma Cavendish had nearly expired, and I had nowhere to go. Governor Cavendish loved me with the idolatrous love of an old man for a young woman, and besought me to be his wife with such insane earnestness that I thought my refusal would certainly be his death, especially as it was well known that he was liable to apoplexy, and that any excitement might bring on a fatal attack. Under all these circumstances, I think I must have lost my senses; for I reasoned with myself—most falsely and fatally reasoned with myself thus: Why should not I, who am about to be cast out homeless and penniless upon the wide world—why should I not secure myself a home, and save this old man's life for a few years longer, by accepting his love and becoming his wife? It is true that I do not love him, but I honor him very much. And I would be the comfort of his declining years. He could not live long, and when he should come to die, I should inherit the widow's third of all his vast estates. And then, after the year of mourning should be over, I could marry my true love, and bring him a fortune too. There, Alden, the reasoning was all false, wicked and fatal. I know that now. But O, Alden, it was not so much for myself as for others that I planned thus. I thought to have blessed and comforted the old man's declining years, and after his death to have brought a fortune to you. These were my motives. They do not justify, but at least they palliate my conduct."

She ceased.

Alden did not reply, but stood up again with his hat in his hand.

"And now, Alden, though we may never be lovers again, may we not meet sometimes as friends? I am so lonely here! I am, indeed, all alone in the world. We may meet sometimes as friends, Alden?" she asked pathetically.

"No, Mrs. Grey. But yet, if ever I can serve you in any way I will do so most willingly. Good-afternoon," said the young man. And he bowed and left the room.

As he disappeared, her beautiful face darkened with a baleful cloud. "No fury like a woman scorned," wrote one who seemed to know. Her face darkened like a thunder-storm, and from its cloud her eyes shot forked lightning. She set her teeth, and clenched her little fist and shook it after him, hissing:

"He scorns me! He scorns me! Ah! he may scorn my love! Let him beware of my hate! He will not meet me as a friend, but he will serve me willingly! Very well. He shall be often called upon to serve me, if only to bring him under my power!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

SWALLOWING A MAN.

John Thomas was a man of keen wit, and strongly tinctured with a love of the humorous. He had been down to Concord, and had seen the Fakier of Ava perform his wonderful tricks of ledgerdemain. He was relating his experience in the bar-room of the Conway House, and among other things he declared that he had gained an insight into many of the magician's manipulations, and that several of the most wonderful tricks he could perform himself.

"For instance," said he, "I can swallow a man whole."

"Bah!" cried Tom Staples, a red-faced woodman, weighing at least two hundred; "p'r'aps you could swallow *me?*"

"Yes."

"I'd like to see you do it."

"I *can* do it."

"I'll bet fifty dollars you can't."

"I shall take that bet."

"Then let's see you begin."

"Not now. I have just eaten supper. I will do it to-morrow morning, in the presence of as many witnesses as you choose; and it shall be done in the Square in front of the hotel."

This was agreed to, and the money was put up. By the following morning the news that John Thomas was to swallow Tom Staples whole had become wide-spread, and a vast concourse, embracing men, women, and children, had assembled to witness the wonderful feat.

At the appointed time the chief actors appeared in the square. John Thomas was smiling confidently, as though sure of success; while Tom Staples looked a little timid and uneasy, as though not quite at rest concerning what was to become of him.

"Are you ready?" asked John.

"All ready," answered Tom. "Begin as soon as you please."

"Will you have the goodness to take off your hat?"

"Sartin."

"Now your boots."

Tom removed his boots.

"Next you will remove your coat. Those big brass buttons might stick in my throat."

Tom took off his coat; and as he threw it upon the ground one of the cooks came out from the hotel with a pail of melted lard and a big whitewash brush, which he deposited by the side of John Thomas.

"Now," pursued John, "you will take off your stockings, and then remove your pantaloons and shirt."

"Eh?—D'ye mean for me to strip stark naked?" queried Tom, aghast.

"Of course I do. The agreement was, that I was to swallow *you*. You are *meat*, but your clothes aren't, nor were they in the bond. If you will strip, I will give you a thorough greasing, and double the bet if you wish. I know I can swallow you,—or, at all events, *I can TRY!*"

Tom gave up beat, and invited his friends into the hotel.

S. C., JR.

◆

ECONOMY.—Never buy anything which with propriety you may avoid buying. People are often reputed to have greater fortunes than they really possess. This is sometimes a fatal circumstance. In attempting to live up to their reputed income, they frequently bring ruin upon themselves. The grand principle of economy is the dismission of vanity.

◆

—A phrenologist, strolling through a churchyard in France, perceived a grave-digger tossing up the earth, among which were two or three skulls. The craniologist took one up, and after considering it a little time, said, "Ah, this was the skull of a *philosopher*." "Very like, sir," said the grave-digger, "for I do see it is somewhat *cracked*."

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1872.

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Startling Truths.

The scientists will yet drive us all distracted. They show that all substances exist in the form of either solids, liquids, vapors, or gases; that by increase of heat alone, the solid is changed to a liquid, the liquid to a vapor, and the vapor to a gas; and that the increase of heat, or such change from solids, clear through the scale up to gases, consists simply of a more rapid vibration of the atoms of the substances themselves.

These truths may seem very harmless when clothed in the cold and unemotional language of science, but just consider the matter practically. Here is a man who is a solid substance, and has no idea of ever becoming even a liquid, much less a vapor or a gas. But the atoms—mind you, the *atoms* of which his solid substance is composed get to vibrating more rapidly than is consistent with a solid state, and straightway he may become a liquid, and be carried off in a pail. As a symptom of the initial workings of the atomic vibration which is thus to transform our substance, what terrors copious perspiration may hereafter strike to our souls!

There are degrees in the terror which these truths inspire. To be melted into a liquid would be bad enough; but to be transformed into a vapor, or sublimated into a gas, would be intolerable. Of course, if one's atomical vibrations reduce him to a liquid, his personal interest in his physical condition may be supposed to cease, but his sympathetic relatives may still have some regard for his remains, which, as a liquid, could be preserved, or even buried with due honors. But the perverse atomic vibration goes on still more rapidly, and the disconsolate mourners see their lamented friend passing off, in the form of vapor, beyond the possibility of becoming mortuary attentions. This would be grievous enough, but the transformation does not stop even here. The atoms vibrate still more furiously, the vapor itself fades from sight, and the defunct, passing off into invisible gas, disappears from the domain of the mortal senses, with no possibility even of marking his last resting place. In fact, what last resting place could there be for a gas?

◆

Speak Low—Count One Hundred.

Have you a quick temper?

A quick temper and a warm heart often go together.

Perhaps, however, you are irritable. Irritability, in many cases, is the result of ill-health, especially of a deranged condition of the nervous system. Improve your health, and you will improve your disposition.

Besides this, there are some very simple rules by the adoption of which you may control or prevent the manifestations of your irritability. One of these is, whenever you are greatly disturbed and excited, to *speak slowly, and in a low voice*. As soon as you shall have controlled yourself, under circumstances of provocation, sufficiently to speak several words without raising your voice above its ordinary pitch, you will find that you have obtained a surprising mastery over your feelings also.

Another rule is, when you are very angry always count one hundred before speaking. This also is a good and efficacious remedy, if you only observe it; but the chances are one hundred to one that when you get very, very angry, you will disregard the rule one hundred times where you observe it once.

◆

The Flowers and the Birds.

The first flowers of spring will soon be open, and the air will again be musical with the songs of birds.

Flowers and birds are common pleasures, but they are pleasures of which we never tire. They make the world more beautiful and more cheerful. They awaken gratitude to God, and they should incline us to do more to render our fellow-beings happy, when we see so much done by our Maker for the enjoyment of all.

◆

The Late Mrs. Astor—Her Hands were Never Idle.

MRS. ASTOR, wife of WILLIAM B. ASTOR—the richest man in New York—died a few days ago. A writer in the *Evening Post* pays the following simple but touching tribute to her virtues:

"Her most distinguishing characteristics were simplicity and industry. Her hands were never idle. It were well for the present and coming generations to remember this—that the wealthiest woman in our land was the simplest and most busy. Her books and work were always at hand; as one was laid aside the other was taken up. Her love of flowers was extreme, and during the winter season a window of her sitting-room would be filled with plants, over which she watched with delighted interest."

A Fearful Disease.

A few weeks ago, a little boy, seven years old, went home from school, in West Thirty-fifth street, in this city, and complained that he had been injured by some of his schoolmates. At four o'clock the next morning he died. There was a prospect that we might have a trial for murder or manslaughter of an almost infantile defendant; and although there was no probability that the example of our English ancestors, who executed boys only eight or nine years of age, would be followed, yet the supposed crime was very painful to contemplate.

Later events have revealed another cause for the death of the unfortunate little fellow. Four children in the same family have died, and the disease is pronounced *cerebro spinal meningitis*. At our latest accounts a fifth child—a bright and interesting girl of thirteen—was in the Bellevue Hospital, suffering from the same malady.

Cerebro spinal meningitis is a rare but most terrible disease. Its victims suffer insupportable pain, especially in the head and back. They are very apt to be hideously contorted, the head being bent afar over backward. Sometimes, according to the testimony of physicians, after recovery in other respects, they remain blind, and in other cases idiotic. Dr. CARNOCHAN once said of the disease, that it was more to be dreaded than Asiatic cholera. Among the romances in real life, or terrible retributions, of which we have heard, was the instance of a lawyer who ridiculed this awful disease in a ribald speech in court, in which he referred to a daughter of his own as having been afflicted by it. She was apparently convalescent at the time, but after lingering a few weeks longer, she died.

This reminded us of another very avaricious lawyer, who shocked the sentiments of all the right-minded people in the community where he lived, by oppressing a poor stone-cutter, with a large family of children. The lawyer had brought a suit against him for his own professional services, and finding no other property to levy upon, attached the gravestones on which the poor stone-cutter was at work, thus depriving him of the means of livelihood for himself and his family. The lawyer had a son, an only child, and his only excuse for his uncontrolled avarice was, that it was for the sake of this boy. But grim Death came along, and with only a few hours' warning, bore off for ever the spirit of this only son. The work of the stone-cutter was again put in requisition, not to satisfy the lawyer's claim, but to mark the resting place of the boy's remains!

The occurrence of *cerebro spinal meningitis* in the family in this city of which we have spoken, is attributed to bad atmosphere, arising from a defective sewer. The little girl in the hospital was constantly exclaiming, "Oh, my head! Oh, my head!" but the pain was relieved by opiates. The disease is not likely to spread to any considerable extent. A few years ago it prevailed in Suffolk county, Long Island, where there were sixteen or twenty cases.

◆

Guessing on Hogs—Is it the Only Way to Determine their Weight?

There is a custom in New Jersey, and in some other States, when the annual season for hog killing comes around, to put up hogs and guess at their weight. A man who has a very large specimen of the swinish race for which he is desirous of obtaining an extra price, offers him to the person who will guess the nearest, while the animal is alive, to his weight after he is dressed. A fee—anywhere from twenty-five cents to a dollar—is charged for the privilege of guessing. A company gather—usually at the village hotel—the hog is killed and weighed, and the guess, or bet, as it might as well be called, which has hit the exact weight, or come nighest to it, wins.

Now the question which we raise is, whether the hog weighs any more or any less in consequence of the guessing, or betting on his weight, than he would weigh without it. Or is the weight any more accurately determined, or ascertained, than it would be without the guessing or betting?

This proposition seems to us to illustrate the absurdity of the gambling test of the speed of horses. A horse's speed is not increased in consequence of bets being made upon it, nor can it be any more accurately decided in consequence of such bets. Watches do not keep any different time—excepting always the watches of *dishonest* judges—when bets are depending on them than when they are not.

The concession to gamblers which has been made by submitting to the doctrine that a horse's speed should not be recorded unless there be a bet upon it, is too absurd to be acquiesced in any longer.

◆

Gardens—Have Gardens—The Garden of Eden.

If you live in the country, have a garden—we mean a vegetable garden. It is a source of natural, healthful gratification. You can have better, fresher vegetables, if you raise them yourself, than you can buy; and being fresher, they are more wholesome. There is a peculiar satisfaction, too, to be derived from raising anything—from a potato to a tree.

A vegetable garden is a source of profit. DANIEL WEBSTER, in a letter written not long before his death, to JOHN TAYLOR, his farmer in New Hampshire, enjoined upon him to have a good garden, and remarked that a family could derive a large part of its support from a garden, during the summer season.

Have a flower-garden. If you have only one flower in it, that is better than none. If you have many varieties, that is better still. It is a simple and innocent, but a purifying and enduring pleasure. It was out of the *Garden* of Eden that our first parents were driven for their sin, and the recreation and cultivation of gardens of flowers seem like a restoration of somewhat of the beauty and charm of their first estate.

◆

Something New in the History of the Law.

EDWARD S. STOKES was indicted by the grand jury for the murder of JAMES FISK, Jr. His counsel put in a plea of abatement, that the grand jury was not drawn and impannelled according to law.

This issue had to be tried by a special jury, summoned for the purpose, and the trial of STOKES on the principal charge had to be postponed until this should be determined.

After the court and jury had been engaged for several days in the trial of Mr. STOKES' plea in abatement, another interruption occurred, from an extraordinary cause. The presiding Justice (CARDOZO) was himself put on trial before the Judiciary Committee of the Assembly, and he was obliged to adjourn the court over to the following week, to attend to his own defence. Mr. STOKES ought to be able hereafter to excite some sympathy for his misfortunes, in the breast of the Judge, for he can say to him, in the popular phrase of the day, "You know how it is yourself."

We hardly think such a series of events ever occurred before in the history of any criminal trial. It is said that there are wheels within wheels, and there seem to be cases within cases.

GOOD-NATURE.

MY DEAR MR. BONNER: Hundreds of questions are asked of me every year; and I am surprised to find how poor and superficial they are. They respect external life mostly; and if they touch upon morals, it is generally of conventional matters, and not of real heart matters.

Who inquires after the things on which so much of life depends for its happiness? An obscure text, a mystery of faith, a disputed doctrine, seem to have a charm to men. But *how to be good-natured*, no one ever asks; and yet good-nature is one of the most precious commodities of life, both to the possessor and to all that come in contact with him. One may own an exquisite picture, and yet, locked in his house, its beauty is sequestered, and few derive any pleasure from it. One having precious stones may flash a moment's admiration upon spectators, but good-nature brings happiness to scores and hundreds, and the best of it is, that it takes nothing from the possessor.

There is so much care in life; so many that are victims of low spirits; so much of sorrow; so many that are languid through sickness or grief, or watching or want, that any one who can throw a ray of light upon their spirits is a benefactor indeed. Good-nature is the most practical of all kinds of benevolence. It gives itself forth without measure. It shines, like the sun, into all places, high and low alike. It chooses nothing, but blesses all, without discrimination. It allays strifes, pours oil upon friction, lightens the tasks of life, and diffuses a cheer and glow which wine cannot give; and all this, too, while the cause of all this blessing is himself blessed above all.

Some men are good-natured in spots; some are good-natured when they have their own way, or have fallen upon some good luck; some are good-natured when at ease, but cross when burdened; some are good-natured in company, and cross at home—all smiles and geniality in the store, and among customers, but lowering and moping at home. Now and then we find a real son of light—a hero of the luminous heart! One who beams forth always like summer upon all, everywhere; whom all men bless when he comes, and all miss when he goes! Such men ought to wear crowns. They do. Grateful thoughts, love and joy form the crown. They wear it unconsciously, but a hundred hearts place it upon their heads, and they go crowned with light all their days!

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

◆

CLUBS FOR THE WORKING MEN.

I read an article on this subject the other day, which set me thinking. In it, was set forth the necessity, after a man's hard day's work, of an evening of rest, away from home, where he should find light and warmth, and boon companionship, other than is to be found in the corner grocery.

Now this is well, were there not a better way, as I believe. I am not about to propose clubs for working women, because our police reports show every day that they have existed for a long time—thanks to "corner groceries"—and that they are made of any implement that comes handy, and result in bruised flesh and a broken head. This being the case, I cannot see why the working woman, as well as the working man, does not need, after a hard day's work, "light, warmth and boon companionship of an evening, away from home." Nay, all the more, since work, hard as her husband may, it is often in the fresh open air; or, if not, he has it going and returning, and the boon companionship of his fellow-workmen with it; while she, with "Ginx's last baby" to look after, in some noisome tenement house, stands over the perpetual wash-tub, or cooking stove, with two or three half-grown children hanging to her draggled skirts, never exchanging her unwomanly rags, not even perhaps to mass for a hurried prayer in the church which, God be thanked, is free alike to poor and rich, and which suggests, in its own way, a distant heaven for her.

Thinking over all this, I said, why not Germanize this thing? Why not have clubs for working men and their families, with innocent amusement, minus the drink? Isn't it possible? Or if not, I wish it were, for the poor harassed women's sake. I only see the millennial germ of it; but this I know, that the wives need it more, far more, than their husbands, the wide world over, and in every strata of society; by the pains of motherhood, even in favorable conditions; by her intenser nervous organization; by her indoor confinement and narrowing petty detail-worries; by the work that ends not at sundown, as does his. By the wakeful, unrestful nights, which every mother knows; *this* is the hardest, most wearing kind of work, no matter what may be said of the husband, who has his sleep at least; who demands *that*, in every family exigency, as his right, and as the foundation of his ability to labor for his family. Ah! what if the wife and mother, with less strength, feebler organization, should make a stand for this? even when, in addition to her other cares, she helps in some outside honest way to support the family?

Does she not, too, need warmth, light and boon companionship of an evening? While it is true that

> "All work and no play
> Makes Jack a dull boy,"

remember it is just as true of Jack's wife as it is of Jack, and the founders of "Workingmen's Clubs" would do well to put this into their foundation.

FANNY FERN.

◆

Atlantic Winter Experiences.

Perhaps no winter ever passed in which such terrible weather has been experienced on the Atlantic as during the present one without the occurrence of any great calamity. The reports of the European steamers have been a continuous record of the most violent storms that ever swept the ocean. The steamship *Helvetia*, from London, which arrived on Wednesday, experienced almost a continuous hurricane from the 31st of January to the 9th of February. On the latter day the terrific force of an angry sea was displayed by its tearing a hole eight feet in length by two broad in the smoke stack, wrecking the bridge, tearing away life boats, etc., and washing Captain Griggs off from the bridge, and nearly taking him overboard. On a previous day a heavy sea engulphed the ship and carried to destruction two unfortunate seamen.

The new steamer *Republic*, which arrived on the 14th from Liverpool, reports the same terrible weather, the great waves boarding the ship, twisting and displacing huge iron castings, as though they were rattans, and battering and destroying everything in their way. All of the Atlantic steam lines have suffered more or less from the severity of the storms. One or two ships have been retired for repairs, several have had to put into Halifax for coal, and the schedule of sailing days in nearly every line has been considerably disarranged. That we have had no terrible calamity to report, is due to the excellent sea-going qualities of the steamers, and the sterling character of their commanders.—*Commercial Advertiser.*

We wonder how it would have been if these steamships had been under the management of the corrupt Tammany Ring of New York, or of the equally corrupt Military Ring of Washington! It makes us shudder to think of it.

◆

[From the New York Star.]

The greatest weekly paper in the world, Mr. Bonner's *Ledger*, is still the favorite with hundreds of thousands of readers. Go where you will, the familiar face of the *Ledger* greets you. Through the East and West it is literally omnipresent. Every news stand, all the depots, thousands of agents and all the great news companies scatter it broadcast over the land; and never has an imprudent or an indelicate phrase offended the modesty—we had almost said the prudery—of the most fastidious.

WHOM THE GODS HELP!
A CLASSIC FABLE.
BY JOHN G. SAXE.

That brave self-help is ever sure
All needed favor to secure
Of gods and men, is often told
In moral fables quaint and old;
Which teach, besides, that tears and prayers
Are worthless to the man who spares
To work—like him who, at his ease,
Sat down and called on *Hercules*
To help him start the load of hay
Which, fastened in the miry way,
Moved not a single inch the more
For all the oaths the carter swore,
Although he cursed, with noisy wrath,
The load, the horses and the path,
The cart, the maker and himself;
Until, at last, the weary elf,
Since all his oaths were doomed to fail,
Bethought him praying might avail;
And so to Heaven he lifts his eyes
And thus to *Hercules* he cries:—
"O mighty god!" the carter prayed,
"Most humbly I beseech thine aid;
For here—was e'er such hapless luck!—
Fast in the mud my cart is stuck,
And, howsoe'er I whip and shout,
My horses fail to draw it out!"
And now a voice the carter hears
Which from the sky salutes his ears,
With words of counsel, such as these:
"Wouldst have the help of *Hercules?*
Then help yourself a little, first;
Your case is surely not the worst:
Remove that stone that blocks the way;
Fill up the rut as best you may.
There!—that will do. Now take your whip
And touch the leader on the hip;
Now put your shoulder to the wheel,
And *now* to Hercules appeal!"
So said, so done! The horses start
The load with ease—out comes the cart!
But, ere the voice had died away,
It spake once more: "'Tis well to pray;
But praying ever best succeeds
When seconded by manly deeds!"

◆

CONCERNING THE SPIRITS.
BY REV. DR. HALL, NEW YORK.

Not ardent spirits. The Total Abstinence friends and the officers of Internal Revenue may be expected to look after them. However much men's heads may be turned, it is not to the alcoholic, but to the magnetic agents we pay our respects. Some men "call spirits from the vasty deep." Others call for spirits for the same, and get them. It is with the former we have to do.

For many Spiritualists—so called—impressed by undoubted facts of which they have been personal witnesses, conclude that the deniers of "Spiritualism" as a system, are ignorant of the facts, and if they knew them would accept their conclusions. They are probably right in their estimate of the knowledge of many, but not of all, who decline their beliefs; and as all have an interest in knowing facts, and some may wish to prosecute inquiry, a few of these are submitted, in no controversial way, but as an humble contribution toward just and clear thinking on a topic of some interest—though far less than is commonly represented.

The subject gained some scientific interest in the hands of Frederick A. Mesmer, a German, born in Baden in 1734, and educated as a physician. He published in 1766 a work called *De Planetarum influxu*, to show that a fine subtle influence pervades the universe, affected like air and water by the heavenly bodies, in turn affecting the nervous system of animals, and influencing human disorders. Then, he concluded, if artificial means of exercising this influence could be obtained, cures might be effected; and he tried magnets.

But a rival in Vienna, with the ominous name of Hell, claimed the prior use of this device, and so far made good his case. In vain Mesmer tried to obtain the endorsement of learned bodies; and his attempt to cure Mademoiselle Paradis, a public singer, in 1777, left her as blind as ever.

Paris has always been a good field for the ingenious, and thither Mesmer went; practised there; made friends; published his theory, and had it refuted. Handsome, and not timid, he intimated that he was a benefactor of the race, and desired an estate as an acknowledgment of his services. On condition that he would submit his process to three persons appointed by the government, a good pension was offered him; but he declined it, and left in high dudgeon for Spa. Returning—tempted by another offer—to Paris, he set up a curative establishment, luxuriously furnished, in which he operated upon his patients, as they gathered round a kind of magnetic battery, producing no doubt many of the familiar phenomena of electro-biology, which, being then new and strange, made him a prodigy. In 1784 the French government appointed a scientific committee of inquiry into the Mesmeric process, including many physicians, and men of repute, such as our own Benjamin Franklin. This committee pronounced it a humbug; so did the Royal Society of Medicine; but that did not prevent Mesmer from escaping to England with about fifty thousand dollars subscribed to pay for his secret. There he lived and spent his money, under another name, but finally returned to Germany, and died in obscurity in 1815.

The life of Mesmer may be regarded as the immediate precursor, in modern times, of table-turning, biology, spirit-rapping and other feats, underlying many of which there is, likely, a basis of true natural fact—such fact, namely, as scientific men recognize as animal magnetism. Mesmer's magnetic rod has given place to passes with the hand; and these again have been dispensed with, and the eyes have been a sufficient means of producing the desired bodily and mental condition. Perhaps a tithe of the human race is susceptible of this abnormal state, which, according to the report on Mesmer's process signed by Franklin, was produced purely by the imagination of the subjects, and not by the operator, as the committee made out by reported experiment on those who were affected.

All that was yet shown, however, was that Mesmer gave an erroneous account of the facts. The facts were there; as probably most intelligent persons have seen them in biological experiments. There was no clear explanation of them. "Everything unknown is taken for the magnificent;" and these mysterious facts offered a tempting facility for "practice." Perkins constructed his patent metallic tractors, and might have made a good thing of them but for Dr. Falkoner of Bath, who made wooden "tractors" that produced identically the same results.

But a new generation is continually coming up, ready to notice curious facts. A man or woman with a few of these, claims the ear and eye. On the narrow base of fact a great pile of—something else, is raised. The pile is condemned as a whole; but a few persons undoubtedly see the base of fact, spurn the unbelievers, and believe too much because too much has been denounced.

The following facts are well known and established on proper scientific evidence, and no one, in his anathemas of imposture and jugglery, need waste his breath in their denunciation.

1. The human mind in some persons, by their gazing on a copper cent, a spot on the wall, or vacancy, can be tired into reverie or sleep; and, as the facts of sleep-walking show, some fall into this state without the act of any one's will, their own or others'. The "operator" only produces this state, as a schoolma'am produces tiredness in a child whom she compels to stand for two hours on one spot.

2. In this state a suggestion can be made to the person by any one, by word, or look, or touch, which will be obeyed. But it must be *so* conveyed. An operator, it is believed on evidence, may *wish* his "subject" to do a thing, for ever, and in vain, until the suggestion is made, and the vague and dreamy ideas of the subject—floating in vacancy—are fixed, and begin to become forces. Being told to do so, the subject will now taste sugar as salt, or salt as sugar, shiver in the cold, or be oppressed with heat.

3. Tables and other movables have, undoubtedly, been moved by persons who did not mean to do it. Faraday showed, by an ingenious contrivance, that a dominant thought producing expectant attention, led persons unconsciously to use force. The correct statement to make concerning these table-turners is, not that they were "a fraud," and conscious impostors, but that they did a real something, only not knowing what they did.

4. Pencils in men's hands have stopped at the revolving letters which made out answers on which their attention was nervously fixed. There is no proof of anything being revealed that is unknown to every one in the company. Nor when "spirits" have been introduced, does their information ever rise above that of the entire company. There is no "inspiration of elevation." Even defects of grammar and spelling have adhered to very distinguished spirits, suspiciously like those of the operators. There is no evidence of any really valuable discovery made to men by such processes. Sir John Franklin and Dr. Livingstone have attracted the attention of the civilized world, and reliable information regarding them would be a welcome boon to science. But it has not come. No new religious truth has been authenticated to men. No great national event has been announced with certainty. Any man who had supernatural communications, a few years ago, as to the issue of the American war, could have made or saved fortunes for multitudes. But no one did so. On the other hand, the spirits, so called, have been convicted of mistakes which would have done them no credit even in the less developed bodily state.

Some years ago, for example, a party of friends, evangelists of Spiritualism, made a visit to Scotland, and set about convincing the gainsayers. A *seance* was arranged in due fashion; large round table; paper; pencils; and the party around. A gentleman offered to put a question to the spirit of his departed father. He wrote, sitting opposite to the missionaries, his question, apparently—as one on the other side of the table might infer from the movement of his pencil—that question which any one surely would first ask if permitted to inquire of the "loved and lost," "Are you happy?" "Yes," was rapped out as the answer. Another question, which was not concealed in any way, "Is my mother with you?" "Yes," was promptly answered. Another question, which might have been, from the pencil's movement, "Is she also happy?" "Yes," again. Yet another, apparently, "Are they all happy in heaven?" (The writer quotes from memory of the London *Weekly Review*, in which the account was published, uncontradicted, and is sure of being accurate.) "Yes," was the reply. "Now, gentlemen," said the questioner, "I shall read my queries and answers." "Are you hungry?" "Yes." "Is my mother with you?" "Yes." "Is she also hungry?" "Yes." "Are they all hungry in heaven?" "Yes." Now that the missionaries should break up the sitting, declaring that there was want of sympathy, or that the spirits were insulted, and indignant, was very natural, but not satisfactory. The greatest supernatural facts of which the world knows, and which won the confidence of men, were evolved in face of hostile multitudes, in open day, and upon most unwilling and unbelieving subjects. With whom was Lazarus *en rapport* when he came forth from the grave before the eyes of a crowd of irritated Hebrews at the Master's call?

It remains, then, that we candidly acknowledge certain very curious natural facts in the human system, capable of development, perhaps in every tenth person, of the same order as dreaming and somnambulism; facts occasionally presented among the older generations, as in the heathen priestesses; and which are to be studied like other natural phenomena, by such scientists as Braid, Carpenter, Holland and Faraday.

It remains also, that we avoid the connecting of these with the invisible world, or expecting through them any supernatural information, or in any shape or form building a religion upon them, or in any way putting them in the same list with the miracles of Scripture—of which they are possibly the ill-intended caricature, their evil use suggested by him who has been called the ape of God—or expecting from them moral and religious results upon unbelievers. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

◆

An Apt Rejoinder.

Bartol was a gentleman, quiet and unobtrusive; but when his dignity was touched he could make a very cutting remark; and his wit was quick and keen. One evening at a social assembly a notorious coquette had promised to dance a certain quadrille with him, and had subsequently engaged herself to another, and disappointed him. Later in the evening, as the two stood near together, the lady, wishing to button her glove, asked Bartol if he thought he could flirt a fan for a moment, at the same time offering him hers. "I don't know, madam," he answered, proceeding gently to manipulate it; "but I think I can *fan a flirt!*"

◆

How to Stop a Runaway Team.
[From the Charleston (Mississippi) Courier.]

When you see a team which has become tired of standing in the street, while the owner is trading, begin to move slowly off, it is your duty to stop it—not by going quietly up and seizing the reins; that's a vulgar and common-sense proceeding, and would not attract attention at all. You must rush frantically at the horses, taking off your hat and swinging it in their faces, shouting at the top of your voice. The horses will most probably break into a run. You must then redouble your shouts, throw your hat after them and give chase. Most horses are so unreasonable as to increase their speed when people are doing all they can to induce them to stop, by waving their arms, swinging their hats and shouting "whoa!" in a voice like the shriek of a locomotive. It therefore becomes the duty of every bystander to exert himself by hallooing, waving his arms, and if convenient, throwing a stick, or a piece of board, or a brickbat, at the fugitives. There is nothing soothes an excited horse like this style of performance, and when twenty to thirty men, with a sprinkling of boys, yelling, cavorting and gesticulating like demons, beset the path of a runaway team, it ought to stop. If it doesnt, it's the fault of the horses.

◆

A Woman Will Have the Last Word.

MY DEAR MR. BONNER:—You ask me,

"Is it not just as essential for a preacher to understand theology, as it is for a pilot to understand navigation?"

Perhaps so; and yet, were a "pilot" bent upon rescuing a drowning man, he would not waste time asking him whether he had properly studied the science of navigation before he pulled him ashore. That's all I contend for.

Then how about the scores of good Christians, unlettered, uneducated, who, holding on to God's promises only, ignorant even of the meaning of the words "creed," or "theology," have safely reached the shining shore over Death's "rapids," having "washed their robes white through great tribulation?"

FANNY FERN.

◆

The Evangelist on "Conditioning" after a Run at "Grass."
[From the New York Evangelist.]

The death is announced of Mr. Wyndham Smith, commonly called "The Assassin," the eldest son of the celebrated Sydney Smith. No story elicited more laughter, some thirty-five years ago, than that which represented Wyndham Smith as placed, at his father's dinner-table, next to an eminent bishop, to whom, after sitting silent and abashed throughout the earlier portion of dinner, he ventured to address one question: "Has your Lordship ever seriously reflected," asked the indiscreet questioner, "how long it took to get Nebuchadnezzar into condition after he came up from grass?"

◆

—A lady was once asked the reason why she always came so early to church. "Because," said she, "it is a part of my religion never to disturb the religion of others."

PACING THE FLOOR.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Sailors' wives always have a habit of pacing the floor.

Oh, who would be a sailor's wife
When his ship has sailed away,
Her black hulk gone from out the dock,
Her white sails from the bay?
And rising breeze and lengthening shade
Proclaim that day is o'er,
And in the gloaming the sailor's wife
Paces her lonely floor.

To other wives gray twilight brings
The greeting smile and kiss,
And all the sordid cares of day
Are changed for homely bliss;
But she can hear no welcome step,
His ship has left the shore,
His feet now tread the lonely deck,
As hers the lonely floor.

The rattle of a window pane,
The rustle of a leaf,
She sees his vessel drive a wreck
Upon some cruel reef.
And up and down, and up and down
Her anxious footsteps go;
As she would tread her fond fears dead,
She paceth to and fro.

Saith she, "My love, my true love,
Far out upon the sea,
How can I gain assurance
Of thy return to me?
For Love is not all-powerful,
And hearts may not rule Fate,
And though I would die for thee
I can do naught but wait.

"And on yon little cradle,
Its pillows still unprest,
The fond smile of a father
Perchance may never rest.
I may be written widow
By the white wrath of the sea,
Ere my dear sailor's baby
Lies sleeping on my knee."

Ah, who would be the sailor's wife
When his ship afar must go!
And sadly in the gloaming
She paceth to and fro!
For restless heart makes restless feet,
And she hears the tempest roar,
And the wild, black waters wash and beat,
Pacing her lonely floor.

FILIPPO, THE BANDIT;

OR, THE

Necromancer of Monte Gargano

By CARLOTTA KINGSLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF NO. 27."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RECLUSE OF SANTA BARBARINI.

Faustina, the recluse of Santa Barbarini, was indeed a wise woman. As Fra Sigismond had truly said, she had listened to many a tale of woe, and none who came to her for relief ever went away empty handed.

Seated in her lonely chamber, high above the noise, the turmoil and the confusion of the Foggia streets, the recluse passed day after day in a continuous routine of duty.

To the world she seemed an idler—one who was exempt from any of life's active cares, by reason of the infirmities of her brain. Some believed—and the Marchesa was among the number—that this mental infirmity was compensated by other gifts of far more value to the world than commonplace intelligence. As infants and insane persons are sometimes believed to have an insight into affairs concealed from the ken of ordinary mortals, so the Marchesa believed there were times when the recluse of Santa Barbarini could read the future; and should she be interrogated at these moments, she would reveal secrets about to transpire.

It was this belief that made her accept Fra Sigismond's hint so readily, and hoping her visit might not be unproductive of favorable results, she repaired to Santa Barbarini.

Even the haughty Marchesa herself was kept waiting many moments before she was admitted to the presence of the recluse. Had the Signora known how this time was being employed by the person whom she had come to consult, it is possible she would have quitted the place before the desired audience was granted.

Seated in her lofty apartment, her face shaded and concealed as usual by a filmy mask, the strange woman was giving audience to another person, of an aspect and degree quite different from that of the Marchesa.

The recluse was a large woman symmetrically formed, of graceful movements, and possessing that repose of manner which always indicates true nobility. It needed but a sight of this woman to refute the rumors which were afloat concerning her, for in no respect did she give any outward evidence of that mental deficiency or physical deformity which were supposed to constitute her claims to interest. On the contrary, she impressed the few who were admitted to her presence as a woman far superior to ordinary mortals, one whose mind had a wider and freer, instead of a more limited range than others.

She was dressed in black, of a material that suited well her large and graceful proportions; and though the mask which she habitually wore gave her a mysterious, almost fearful appearance, that impression was subdued when a glance at her hands, so fair, so small and so womanly, unconsciously inspired respect, interest and confidence.

The tones of her voice when she spoke were soft and winning, and her rare choice of language denoted a degree of education far beyond the average at that time.

The person to whom the recluse was granting the rare favor of an interview at the time of the Marchesa's visit, was one whose appearance was quite incongruous when compared with his surroundings.

The visitor—a man—stood before her humbly, as before a superior being, his eyes bent upon the floor, and his hands nervously playing with the draggled tassel of a still more faded and draggled hat. He was a man of the people, ill-fed, filthy and discontented. His name was Jacopo.

The voice of the recluse was unusually severe as she addressed him:

"In homely phrase it is said that 'a dog that will bring a bone will carry one.' Adrian of Palermo is thy master, is he not?"

"Aye, Signora."

"Thou hast sworn to be faithful to him, without doubt."

"Not so, Signora. 'Tis but a matter of service. I receive his gold and I serve him faithfully for that, and more he cannot ask. He is a Jew, and I am an Italian. There is no country that he will not betray, and I, poor and despised as I am, love Italia, and will still more faithfully serve those who love her also."

"But a Jew is a man and a brother; he has the same claim upon thy fealty to truth."

"I deny it not, Signora; but this Adrian disgraces his name and his people."

The recluse sneered.

"I will not deny, Jacopo," she presently said, "that you have often brought me valuable news—news that has done the good cause rare service. But what is this that brings thee hither now?"

"A matter of greater moment than any that has ever before led me here."

"Name it, Jacopo."

The man looked suspiciously about him, as though fearful that others might be within listening distance.

"Have no fear, Jacopo," the recluse said. "Thine own devices are happily not practised here. Hast thou been listening again at Adrian's door?"

Jacopo nodded.

A feeling of aversion crossed Faustina's mind. For her own sake she would have refused information so obtained, but the cause for which she labored and prayed was in too great a strait for her to be fastidious; so, smothering her scruples, she bade the man proceed.

He shifted himself from one foot to the other, and said:

"Last night there came to Adrian's lodgings a cavalier most bravely dressed, one who had sought him before, and together they planned a deed which to-morrow will plunge all Italy into mourning."

"What was it, Jacopo? What new calamity can be threatening us?"

"A terrible calamity, Signora. One that cannot be suspected, can hardly be believed. Adrian ordered me from his chamber, but I soon stealthily returned and heard the names of King Alfonso, of Prince Ferdinand and King Charles whispered within, Signora."

Jacopo lowered his voice, and drawing nearer the recluse, bent his head close to her ear and cautiously said:

"The brave Signor who came to Adrian tempted him with French gold, and with many other promises, to do a terrible thing—and he has promised it. Prince Ferdinand is to be surprised, to be murdered in the streets of Foggia this very night."

The recluse started, and put up her hand to thrust the man away.

"This cannot be so," she said. "How know they that the Prince is in Foggia?"

"They know it for a certainty, Signora. Adrian bears him no love; and they also hate the Necromancer of Monte Gargano, whom they say loves the Prince and the cause more than life itself."

"'Tis true, Jacopo."

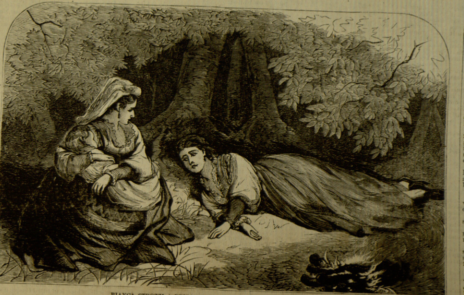
"'Tis to be revenged upon the Necromancer that Adrian has promised."

"For any other reason, Jacopo?"

"Aye, Signora, for many more. Adrian can no longer dwell in Foggia. The people fear him. They know his deadly practices, and they mutter against him, as they did in Rome and in Milan. He knows that soon they will break forth into open abuse, and he knew not where to go. But this strange Signor promises him a safe retreat in France, also much French gold, as well as revenge upon Prince Ferdinand and the Necromancer, besides one other reward."

"What is the other reward?"

"I did not rightly hear, for it concerned a woman, and women, Signora, are things about which I care not to trouble my poor head. But it seems Adrian once loved a Sicilian maiden, and nearly won her, when the Necromancer took her from him, and has since guarded her from his sight."



BIANCA STROZZI A PRISONER IN THE RETREAT OF THE BANDITTI.

"Is she also promised to Adrian, if he will perform the deed thou hast named?"

"Aye, Signora. The one who promised these things swore he knew where she was concealed, and he would reveal it. 'Twas that, I think, more than aught else that made him yield at last."

"Heard ye the name of this lost Sicilian maiden?"

"Juanita, Signora, if I mistake not."

"Juanita, Juanita," Faustina murmured. "The name is not unfamiliar. I too am from Sicily, and well remember the ill repute in which Adrian of Palermo is there held."

She mused for some moments in silence.

"Jacopo," she presently said, "thou hast done well to come hither to-day. Art thou willing to accept the promise of future reward, and at present only receive a few gold pieces as an earnest of what will hereafter be given thee?"

"Aye, Signora. I came not here for gold or other reward. I could not remain quietly at home, knowing what might be. Yet I will not refuse the gold, Signora, for Adrian will presently leave me, and no one enters my little shop to buy of me now."

She drew from her bosom a well-filled purse, and emptied it into Jacopo's hand.

"Not all of this, Signora," he said, in surprise. "A half, a quarter will be more than enough."

"Nay, take it all, Jacopo. It will be many days before I can see thee again. Come not hither any more until thou canst do so openly. Risk nothing by coming at present. Take up thy basket of wares, and if any one demands of thee what Faustina, the recluse of Santa Barbarini, bought to-day, tell them that she only purchased a few rosaries and crosses to solace the poor captives in San Gregore."

As she spoke she leaned over the basket of the pseudo peddler, and selected therefrom the articles she named, and placing these upon the table at her side, waved Jacopo from her presence.

When he was gone, she arose and paced her small apartment with nervous excitement.

"The end is not yet, but it approaches," she said. "It approaches slowly, surely, and may the saints grant, successfully. The horizon is very dark at present; angry clouds obscure the rising sun; but soon it will rise triumphantly above them, the mists will be driven away, and the light which has been hidden from us so long will shine upon us all. My soul longs for the fulfillment of this promised dream. I pray that death may be my portion, if Providence denies this boon to the nation. Liberty, liberty is better than life; it is sweeter than love, it is a foretaste of Heaven—"

A noise behind her made her turn suddenly about. A little Nubian boy, a slave, stood just within the room.

"Well, Pyrro, what is it thou wilt have?" Faustina said.

"The Marchesa, Signora. The Marchesa has been waiting for thee many moments."

"Is she impatient?"

"Aye, Signora. She bids me say that she must see thee this instant."

"Then conduct her hither."

The slave withdrew.

"I cannot think of this false Marchesa without a shudder," the recluse said to herself when he was gone. "A murderess, a traitress, a false friend and a bitter foe, an unwomanly woman and an unnatural mother, the world were better off without her presence, yet humanity protects her, and mercy will let her live."

Her monologue was cut short by the entrance of the Marchesa herself.

Faustina arose to welcome her distinguished visitor, but the welcome was gravely uttered, and the obeisance she made her was as lofty as the Marchesa's own.

Evidently the latter was surprised at the haughty bearing and imposing manner of the recluse, so different from the impression she had conceived. As much abashed, therefore, as people of her quality ever are in the presence of an inferior, she accepted the cushioned seat the other proffered her, and presently recovering her usual composure, said:

"The favor of an audience with the Recluse of Santa Barbarini is one I feared would be denied me, for people say, Signora, thou art chary of meeting and conversing with strangers."

"They tell the truth, Marchesa. Yet it ill becomes one who lives within these walls at the sufferance of regal or vice-regal charity, to refuse to see her protectors. The Marchese or the Marchesa Strozzi are ever sure of a reception."

"Alas!" the Marchesa exclaimed, wiping away a tear. "The Marchese will never solicit the favor; but his widow comes to thee, Faustina, for comfort and for counsel."

An involuntary shudder, which the Marchesa did not perceive, passed over Faustina. She had been so long a recluse that the falsehoods of the world shocked her, and she could not calmly hear them uttered.

"I fear the Marchesa Strozzi has applied to a poor comforter."

"Not so, Signora. By priestly advice I have come hither. Fra Sigismond truly said that none applied to thee for comfort in vain, and I am come to consult thee about that which concerns—which constitutes—my happiness."

"Speak on, Marchesa."

"I am a childless widow, Faustina. Only a few days ago I had both a husband and a daughter; but death has robbed me of the one, and the banditti of the Abruzzo of the other."

A searching, reproachful question rose to Faustina's lips; but repressing it, she remained silent, while the Marchesa continued:

"All the hopes which a wife and mother might naturally cherish have been blasted by these misfortunes. Grief has nearly deprived me of reason. I know not if my daughter will ever be restored to my arms, and I have come to implore thee to exercise in my behalf those powers which it is well known thou possessest. Question the future for me, Faustina. Take pity on a mother's despair. Suspense is worse than dread uncertainty. Much rather would I know that I should never again look upon my daughter's face than feel as now I feel. Perchance at this very moment she may be calling upon my name in an agony of terror; perchance she lies in the throes of death; perchance—"

"Calm yourself, Marchesa," said Faustina, stretching out her hand and laying it upon those the Signora extended toward her, clasped in passionate appeal. "Thy daughter may be in better keeping than if she had remained in Foggia."

The Marchesa looked quickly up. A guilty conscience made her fear that all her wicked wiles were known. But though the recluse may have known much, she betrayed not her knowledge by look or sign, and the Marchesa believed she had been needlessly alarmed.

"It cannot be," she cried. "Thou knowest not the banditti of the Abruzzo, if such is thy thought. Murder is their pastime, and the fate of a defenceless girl is a horrible certainty in a mother's mind. I pray thee, consult those mystical books wherein such wondrous knowledge is contained; read the future for me, I implore thee, Faustina, and thus relieve me of this suspense."

"I know of no such mystical volumes as those of which thou hast spoken," the recluse replied. "I possess none, and I know not how to read them."

"But thou canst read the future. Thou canst force time to disclose some of its secrets. I beg thee to do so now, for there are many things that I must and that I will know."

"What are they, Marchesa?"

Faustina longed to sound the depths of this woman's soul. She longed to know the secrets she kept locked in her breast, and she longed, too, to ease her into a fancied security, for Faustina the Recluse was not the insane dependent she seemed.

"What are thy fears, Marchesa? Thy sorrows are already known to me; but what are thy fears and thy hopes?"

"They are many, good Faustina. Wilt thou promise me thy aid?"

"I will promise thee the aid of one whose experience stands in the place of magic; one whose hopes and fears will establish between us a mystic sympathy. Aye, to prove to thee that I may aid thee in this way, I will ask if thou art not troubled by the return to Foggia of one whom thou hast little reason to love; and I will ask thee if it is not on his account that thou hast come to Santa Barbarina to-day?"

"Who told thee this, Faustina?"

"Is it strange that I should know of things that pass in the outer world? Cannot my eyes look upon the streets below me, and cannot my ears hear the shouts the people give for the young and newly appointed Governor?"

The Marchesa frowned angrily.

"Have they dared do so so quickly?" she cried. "Have they so soon forgotten the Strozzi? Could Capello already have proclaimed himself ruler?"

"I say not that he has done so, Madame," Faustina replied. "But the time will soon come when such sights and such sounds will greet my eyes and ears."

"May that moment never arrive!" ejaculated the Marchesa. "I will not, I cannot descend from the vice-regal throne! I will not be supplanted by this Capello!"

Disappointment, chagrin and anger drew from the Marchesa this outbreak. A moment after she regretted her vehemence, and hastened to add:

"Verily I have been afflicted enough in the loss of husband and child, without now being forced to seek a home and an asylum elsewhere. Faustina, tell me if by some means I may not circumvent this Capello, and cause him to return whither he came?"

It was apparently the weak appeal of a baffled, disappointed woman, whose paltry schemes had been overturned, and whose feeble preferences had been disregarded; yet when Faustina looked into the speaker's eyes, she saw that in reality it was the outbreak of an *intriguante* whose plots were only clogged by a new obstacle, and that ere long a fell alternative would tempt her to a darker sin than she had yet committed.

So, knowing much and foreseeing more, Faustina presently said:

"Marchesa, have no fear for the future. Its decrees are ordered for thee more mercifully than thou couldest expect. At times it is indeed given me to know something of the future. I can read coming events by aids you wot not of, and this much I may therefore tell thee for a certainty: Capello will not long remain in Foggia. Other duties will presently summon him hence. Thou mayest still reign here in peace. Five days from this the power of the oppressor will be broken."

"Five days!" exclaimed the Marchesa. "That is the limit of the Necromancer's power. Is he the oppressor of whom thou speakest? Is it not his power that will be broken when five days are passed?"

The recluse appeared not to heed the interruption.

She repeated:

"In five more days the power of the oppressor will be broken. Then the burdens of the sorrowing will be lifted from their shoulders; those whom misfortune have made captive will be set free; the saddened will rejoice, the wicked be brought low. Have patience, Marchesa; have courage, have hope. For this day only curb thy temper; reveal thy hopes to no one; take counsel with no one, but in the vice-regal palazzo remain as quietly as possible. To-morrow Capello will quit Foggia; the Necromancer of Monte Gargano, who directs and controls the obstacles that are thrown in thy pathway, will also be gone, and the town will be at thy command. Not one of thine enemies will be within the gates; none will remain to vex thee, or to make thee apprehend greater trials."

"And Bianca?"

"Thy daughter will return to Foggia in time, Marchesa. I cannot tell thee when, but thou wilt see her again; of that thou mayest rest assured."

"There are still many other things I would know, Faustina."

"Speak on."

"There is a certain Signor who quitted Foggia many days ago, promising he would speedily return. He comes not, and I fear he has been foully dealt by. Canst thou tell me aught concerning him?"

"His name, Marchesa."

"'Tis Don Cesare Gaetano."

"If Don Cesare Gaetano has gone where duty called, it is well with him; but if he has turned aside to serve his own purposes or pleasures, he will not return."

"What of Concini, Faustina? Will he also be cheered by a happy future?"

"His future and thine are indissolubly connected. What happens to thee will happen to him."

"'Tis as I would have it," cried the elated Marchesa. "My fortune or misfortune I would have shared by him."

"Shared by him they will be, Marchesa."

"Still another question I would ask thee, good Faustina. What of the French king and his army? Is he still supinely resting in Naples?"

"Not so, Madame. He has heard that forces are being sent against him, and he has arisen to defeat them. His army has taken the field, and soon a great troop will be encamped upon yonder campagna."

The Marchesa clasped her hands with joy. 'Twas well for the recluse that her face was concealed, otherwise the look of scorn that passed over her face would have warned and alarmed the joyful *intriguante*.

"Only be calm, be patient, be hopeful, and everything will result as it should," said Faustina. "Be apprehensive of no danger; distress not thyself with fresh plotting. Thy affairs are in the hands of those who can direct them much better than thou canst do. Return to the palazzo, and be at peace."

The Marchesa arose.

"I thank thee, Faustina," she said. "Thy words have greatly comforted me; and were it in my power, I would do thee as great a kindness."

"Name it not, Excellenza," was the reply. "Whatever I have done for thee has been a labor of love. I live for others, not for myself, and the satisfaction I feel in thus doing is my best reward."

The Marchesa paused a moment, as though considering another matter than those already discussed, but seeming to decide not to broach it, she took a grateful leave of the recluse of Santa Barbarini.

Faustina looked at the door through which her second visitor had passed. She waited until the sound of her footsteps and those of the attendants who awaited her below had passed away, when she hastily arose, and opening a closet, took therefrom a cloak of goodly proportions, which she threw over her shoulders. A hood concealed her head and masked face as effectually as did the ample cloak her figure; and thus accoutred, she sallied forth.

None of the sentinels disputed her way; for though nominally a recluse, scarcely a night passed that she did not go forth upon some errand of duty, love, or mercy.

Twenty-four hours had now passed since Melchior sought the haunt of Adrian of Palermo—twenty-four hours, and the time had come when the promise then made was to be fulfilled.

In the quarter of Foggia where the Necromancer had taken up his abode, the streets were darker and less easy to thread than in the more open stradas where the richer residences stood.

Undeterred by the lateness of the hour, by the darkness of the night, or by the many other obstacles which usually stand in the way of a woman being abroad after daylight has gone, Faustina passed swiftly on.

A shudder of horror ran through her frame as, in passing a deep door-way in the darkest part of the quarter, she saw a silent figure closely pressed against the portal. She knew why that figure was placed there; she knew that another passer-by was awaited, and she knew that there was murder in the heart of the watcher.

Faustina quickened her steps when this door-way was passed. She almost flew along the darkened street. Once she fell with force, and struck her head violently against the hard, rough pavement. For a moment she lay stunned by the fall; then rising quickly to her feet, she staggered on feebly, uncertainly, but still most rapidly.

She paused not to knock upon the door where the Necromancer dwelt. Easily effecting an entrance, she flew to the apartment where at that time she knew he usually sat. She burst impatiently into the room only to find it empty, to behold signs of recent occupancy, to become aware that those whom she sought had been there, and to feel that she had arrived too late.

Uttering a groan that was partly called forth by pain, partly by poignant mental anguish, she threw herself upon the floor, and in a state of mind none can imagine, none describe, she gave herself up to passionate exclamations of regret.

Presently the sound of voices struck upon her ear. Quickly catching at any sound which awakened hope in her heart, she held her breath to catch the welcome sound.

It came from the corridor without the room. Springing to the door, she tore it open, and was confronted by the Necromancer and another who stood with him upon the threshold.

"I was told the Prince was with thee," she said.

"Aye, that he was, Faustina," the Necromancer replied, "but he quitted us not many moments since to go to—"

"Which way went he? Through which strada?" demanded Faustina breathlessly, seizing the Necromancer by the arm and using force to expedite his reply.

"By the Via del Popolo," was the answer.

"'Tis the Via Dolorosa," she almost shrieked. "Death lies that way. Prince Ferdinand is a dead man, and all Italy will mourn him an hour hence!"

Leaving her hearers nearly stunned by the utterance of her words and the violence of her manner, Faustina dashed past them as they stood upon the stairs.

She flew rather than ran along the route by which she had come. Little cared she now that she stumbled and fell, and stumbled and fell again, in the dense darkness.

Before her she could see but one object—a deep door-way, with the waiting murderer within, and the unsuspecting victim going nearer and nearer, step by step, to his death.

In the dim distance, many rods before that fatal door-way, was a simple shrine to the Virgin, with a lamp burning before it—a simple altar, most common at that day, as at this, in many Italian towns.

The light served a double purpose. It assisted and guided the penitent to the way-side altar, and the gentle light it shed abroad was an assistance to the belated wayfarer.

Faustina kept her eyes steadily fixed upon this lamp, for in the band of light which it threw across the street she momentarily expected to see a figure enter. If the dark deed were not already accomplished, if her fleet footsteps were of any avail, she would see Prince Ferdinand pass the shrine in going to his death.

Thus speeding onward, her gaze was fixed on that one bright spot. Suddenly her heart gave a great throb of delight, for across the lighted way she saw the figure of a man rapidly step.

She recognized the free, the easy gait, and knew that the moment had arrived for her to press more madly forward.

With the hot blood nearly bursting from mouth and nostrils, she flew on. She essayed to speak, to call to the doomed man to stay his course, but only gasps and inarticulate groans came from her panting breast.

She knew she gained upon the man she hoped to save—a few rods only now intervened between them; but, alas! before that distance could be lessened the fatal door-way would be reached.

It was reached already! Already the victim was abreast of the spot where his executioner stood.

Faustina saw the huge figure of Adrian dart quickly forth, and she saw the sharp blade glitter in the air.

A long, piercing shriek woke the slumbering echoes of the strada.

The blow descended, but its aim was broken by the warning shriek, and it fell harmlessly at the victim's side. Frightened and exasperated that his thrust had been so futile, Adrian raised his arm again and again and took deadly aim; but by this time the victim had recovered from the surprise of the attack. His own weapon was in his hand, and when Adrian raised his arm to repeat the blow, Prince Ferdinand forestalled his purpose by driving his poniard into his own bosom.

The poisoner, the traitor and the would-be assassin met his just reward, for he who had come out to slay was himself slain.

He fell heavily to the ground at the very moment that Faustina reached the spot.

"*Madre*, I thank thee!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands and looking upward with deep emotion.

"Who art thou?" asked he whom she had warned and rescued.

"I am Juanita of Palermo," she replied; "otherwise called Faustina, the Recluse of Santa Barbarini."

CHAPTER XX.

THE MAGICIAN'S SPELL.

The camp fires in the secret amphitheatre of the Abruzzo burned low. The wearied banditti, exhausted by a successful raid they had that day made upon the plains below, lay stretched upon the grass, buried in profound slumber.

The few sentinels who had been placed at the entrance of the retreat to guard against possible surprise, leaned lazily upon their weapons, for in the security of their mountain stronghold, their watch was but an inexorable custom.

Occasionally a restless sleeper would start in his dreams, as though he was living over again in his night visions the experiences of the day, and the stillness around would be broken by words of daring, of triumph, or oftener still, of imprecation.

Gaspard, the chieftain, was the only one of the band whom duty kept not awake, yet who slept not. Dark thoughts ever found a welcome home in his breast, but this night his reflections were of even a moodier, more sanguinary cast than usual.

To such a nature it matters little how successful may be the usual course of events. Should one project be balked, every other enterprise is imbittered.

Thus it was with the outlaw chieftain. Three days had already passed since he brought Bianca to the camp; three days since he made his repulsive offer of marriage, and three days since she made her wild effort to escape.

A raging fever had since then steeped her senses in delirium. The fearful scenes she had passed through were ever present to her mind, and her loud calls for friends and kindred were mingled with prayers for mercy, and with incoherent plans for escape.

Perplexed, irritated and exasperated by this result of his bold adventure, Gaspard's professed love was quickly turning to hatred. The woman whom he had at first detailed to wait upon the Signorita was supplanted by another, one whose husband was among those condemned with Filippo, and executed by the Marchese's order. Gaspard rightly conjectured that the vengeful security of this woman's care would be a fit prelude to the more rigorous revenge he was himself plotting.

In a corner of the camp the furthest removed from the chieftain's resting place, the captive Signorita lay tossing with fever upon a bed of forest leaves. Her beautiful hair was spread in a tangled mass upon her rude pillow, and the fitful rays of the fires gleamed upon a countenance distorted by pain, flushed with fever, and made fearful in expression by delirium.

As she lay alternately moaning with suffering and pleading for freedom, the attendant to whose care she had been assigned sat gloomily beside her, watching her writhings with an indifference which could only result from a depraved, unfeeling heart.

The woman's attention was equally divided between her sick charge and a sleeping infant lying in a rustic cradle at no great distance from her.

The Signorita moaned heavily and opened her eyes. The full black orbs of the Italian woman were bent upon her with ominous meaning. A ray of returning sense gleamed across the poor captive's mind; something in the woman's look recalled other scenes and other memories. Still keeping her eyes fixed upon the face before her, Bianca presently murmured, while she extended her hand toward her guardian:

"Thine is a familiar face. Have I not seen and known thee before?"

The woman took no notice of the feebly extended hand, neither did she reply to the sick girl's question.

"If thou hast ever been an acquaintance and friend, why wilt thou not assist me now?"

Still the woman made no reply.

Bianca continued:

"Surely if thou wert in peril, I would not let thee ask help of me in vain."

A bitter smile crept over the woman's face.

"There was a time when I might have asked help of thee in vain. There was a time when thou couldest have aided me and mine, for we were in a mortal strait; but instead of lifting voice or finger in our behalf, thou laughed and danced on, thou and thy proud mother and cruel father."

"When?" asked Bianca, in bewilderment. "When did I disregard any appeal for help? When did I ever see thee in want, and not give thee what was necessary—"

"Can gold buy back a life, Signorita? Dost thou remember Filippo and the men who were murdered with him?"

The angry light that burned in the woman's splendid eyes cleared the films from the captive's memory, and she remembered when and where she had seen her guardian before. She vividly remembered that day when she crossed the square of Foggia with her mother to visit Petrelli's shop; remembered the woman holding a child; remembered how her magnificent dark eyes had attracted her admiring attention, and how afterward the scowling glances she received from those eyes awakened in her heart a foreboding fear that was not easily lulled.

The Signorita said:

"Ah, I know thee now," and she closed her eyes wearily, as she thought how futile every effort would prove to melt her to pity.

The wo[illegible] [illegible] her hand into her bosom and drew forth a few gold pieces.

"Here is the gold thou gavest me," she said. "Take them back again, for they burn me while I possess them. Take them back again, I say. I would rather starve than quench hunger or thirst with the charity of a Strozzi."

Bianca shuddered as she thus comprehended the length and the breadth of the enmity that pursued her. She covered her face with her hands, and remained silent many moments.

A rustling beside her caused her to look up. It was only the woman, who had arisen, and was going toward the spot where Gaspard lay.

Bianca raised her head, and looked quickly about her. None of the banditti were near, save those fast locked in sleep. Could she not steal away from her rude couch? Could she not noiselessly gain the entrance to the camp, and, eluding the sentinels, make one more effort to escape?

She partly raised herself upon her elbow, but weakness threw her quickly back. A heavy sigh, a groan almost, escaped her.

"Oh!" she bitterly murmured. "Why am I bereft of the poor boon of strength when escape is almost within my reach? Only a few steps intervene between me and liberty, yet I have not the power to take them!"

Again she struggled to rise. Despair lent momentary vigor to her frame, and she had nearly gained her feet when a cry from the infant near attracted its mother's attention, and the captive's vengeful guardian returned.

Bianca sank back upon her bed, more feeble, more despairing than ever.

"What wast thou about to do, Signorita?" demanded the woman sternly. "Was escape in thy mind?"

She laughed loudly.

"Escape!" she cried. "Thou escape from the camp, when but this morning I looked to see thee die of weakness? How far thinkest thou thy feet could have carried thee? Hadst thou passed the sentinels yonder, the first rock against which thy feet stumbled would have sent thee reeling into the abyss below. Art thou in such haste for death, Signorita?"

Bianca opened her eyes.

"Aye, that am I," she replied.

"Have patience yet a little longer, *figlia*," the woman tauntingly rejoined. "The band moves to-morrow to another retreat. Our last adventure was too successful, and our enemies are assembling to take us. Wait until to-morrow, Signorita, and thy case will be disposed of for thee, for Gaspard will allow no sick and helpless ones to burden and task our movements."

The horror which filled the young girl's eyes provoked another brutal laugh from her inhuman keeper.

"'Tis like thy timid patrician temper," she sneeringly said. "One moment thou makest a boast that death is longed for, and when death is before thee thou wouldest fly from it with whirlwind-speed."

"What is to be done with the sick and helpless?" asked Bianca feebly.

The woman shrugged her shoulders.

"Ask Gaspard," she said. "He bade me come and tell him when thy reason returned. Doubtless he will answer thy question himself."

Bianca pointed to the infant the woman had taken in her arms, and whose cries she was stilling with maternal solicitude.

"Is not thy infant helpless also? Will he be taken from thee because he is so?"

The woman glared wrathfully upon the questioner.

"As long as I share my strength with the babe, is it any of Gaspard's affair? I ask neither him nor his men to carry this burden for me, and when he is grown the duty will be returned. But is there any one in the camp who will do as much for thee?"

"Alas! no," said Bianca. "Yet let them leave me here," she added, hope again reviving in her breast. "I care not that I am left alone. I fear no solitude, and—"

"Verily 'twould be a pretty plan!" said another voice beside her, and looking fearfully up, she saw that Gaspard had approached.

"It would be a pretty plan!" he repeated. "If starvation did its work, thy decaying body would be a certain guide to our retreat; and if by hap or hazard thou couldest crawl away, thy prating tongue would soon send spies upon our track."

"I promise, I swear I will not," cried Bianca. "Oh, good Gaspard, only let me go free, only let me remain here when the band leaves this retreat, and I solemnly aver I will not breathe a word that would lead to thy surprise and capture. I will befriend thee instead, whenever I can do so, and thou shalt never find me an ingrate."

Gaspard sneered at the girl's words, and haughtily replied:

"A captive's promises are easily made, and easily broken. I would sooner trust a rope of sand than a woman's oath. No, Signorita; if thou wilt not [illegible] my bride, thou shalt be no other man's. If thou wilt not share my power as chief of the Abruzzo banditti, I will send thee to reign with Sathanas in his fiery kingdom below."

"What wilt thou do, Gaspard?"

"Thou 'lt soon discover, Signorita. Thy father sent many a brave comrade the same way thou wilt travel, so the road is not a new one."

"Have mercy upon me, Gaspard! have mercy!"

"I know not the word."

"Pity me, good Gaspard! For the Virgin's sake, pity!"

The chief folded his arms, and looked coldly down upon the supplicant.

"Did the Strozzi have pity upon Filippo? Was he saved from the death he merited not?"

"Yes!" cried Bianca, springing upon her knees. "Filippo is not—"

A hissing sound, like the rush of forked lightning, and a noise like a thunder peal rent the air above them.

Bianca fell back upon her couch, pale, silent and insensible.

"Heaven punishes the falsehood before it is fairly uttered," said Gaspard, when he had himself recovered from the shock of the sudden peal.

A thunderbolt from a cloudless sky at noonday could not have caused greater consternation in the camp. Many of the banditti, startled from their slumber, started to their feet; while others, more heavily bound by weariness, partly raised themselves, and then, as the noise was not repeated, reclined again upon the ground.

Gaspard stood leaning against the rocky wall, near the Signorita's resting place.

Though cruel as the grave, courageous to foolhardiness, and boastful that nothing upon the earth, nor above it, nor beneath it, had power to frighten him, his breast nevertheless beat more quickly, and he watched for the Signorita's returning consciousness with more interest than he would acknowledge.

Inwardly he questioned himself regarding the strange phenomenon. What could it have been? It was not a thunderbolt that had struck the captive dumb and senseless, for no lightning either preceded or accompanied the sound.

"Petronella!"

The dark-eyed, black-browed woman looked up from her infant's breast, upon which she had bowed her face to hide her terror.

"What is it, Gaspard?"

"Did any light come with that sound, think you?"

"Nay, Gaspard. No light have I seen, save that which comes from yonder fires."

Gaspard shook himself, as though he would be rid of a foolish fancy that depressed him, despite his better judgment.

"What ails the Signorita?" he demanded. "Did my threat deprive her of life, or is it as I first surmised? Is she punished for the falsehood she was uttering when that fearful crash surprised us all?"

He bent over the girl, to look more closely at her pale, still face.

As he did so, darkness seemed to fall upon the camp.

He raised himself quickly, and looked toward the fires. Their light seemed gradually and slowly paling. They smouldered and flickered with uncertain intent; the vivid yellow flames, which before threw so bright a glow over the whole camp, assumed a paler, a feebler hue.

Gaspard opened his lips to call the men to replenish them with fresh fuel, but at that moment they again burst into a bright flame; yet an instant thereafter, with another loud report like the first, they were totally extinguished.

Immediately throughout the camp there was noise and confusion. Efforts were made to rekindle and replenish the fires, but every attempt failed. The same cause which had extinguished them prevented their being again started, and the confusion in the camp was made still more perplexing by darkness.

"Comrades!" cried an authoritative voice from a distant part of the amphitheatre. "Comrades, keep silent!"

It was Gaspard's voice, and his mandate was instantly obeyed.

"Comrades," he continued, "I know the meaning of this strange thing. Once before have I beheld a scene like this, and I know what it portends. Keep silent, for ere long stranger events will occur. Were the Necromancer of Urbino, or of Monte Gargano here—"

"The Necromancer of Monte Gargano is here," said a loud, deep voice, seeming to come from the centre of the camp. "The Necromancer of Monte Gargano is here. He is sent with a message to Gaspard, the chieftain of the Abruzzo."

Gaspard stepped forth from his retired position, and drew nearer the spot whence the voice came. The other banditti drew timidly back, for, superstitious as they were, they cared not to be identified with the scene they feared was now about to take place.

Following the direction of the sound, an unseen hand was presently laid upon Gaspard's arm, and a voice said in his ear:

"Halt, chieftain! Thou must come with me away from this spot, away from thy comrades, and away from this well-known haunt."

The chief drew back.

"Dost thou fear?"

"Gaspard knows no fear."

"Then follow me."

The moon, which had been riding low in the heavens, now showed her fair face over the rocky barrier which formed the wall upon one side of the retreat. By aid of this light, Gaspard could see the person by whom he was confronted; could see that he was a tall man, and a powerful one; could see that he was habited in a fashion that but few men of that age affected; could see, too, that the stranger's arm was raised, and that he pointed to the mountains beyond their resting place.

Still Gaspard hesitated.

"Why art thou reluctant?" demanded the mysterious visitor.

"Because I have enemies, and because I may be surprised," Gaspard frankly replied.

"Who led thee hither?"

"No one."

"How didst thou find our asylum?"

"I was directed hither."

"By whom?"

"By one who was once one with thee, but whom the judge's sentence has made a stranger among you."

"Whom mean you?"

"Filippo."

An awful silence followed the words.

Presently Gaspard resolutely said:

"Lead on, *Maestro*. I fear not to follow one whom Filippo hath sent."

"Thou mayest have as little fear as though I were Filippo's self," was the reply.

Guided and lighted by a pale light which seemed to play about the Necromancer and make him luminous, the two proceeded to the entrance of the amphitheatre.

The sentinel looked fearfully at them as they passed. The Necromancer inspired him and all who beheld him with awe, but upon Gaspard they looked as upon a doomed man whom they would never see return.

Perhaps in the pale light the chieftain saw and interpreted this look, and if he trembled not for his life, he trembled lest he should be supplanted during his absence, for before leaving the camp he turned and commanded his people to stir not abroad while he was gone, neither were they to admit friend or captive to their ranks.

"What commands wilt thou leave regarding the Signorita?" asked the Necromancer.

"What knowest thou of any Signorita here, *Maestro*?"

The Necromancer made an impatient movement.

"Do I not know all things?" he said. "Command thy people to treat the maiden well; bid them attend to every want and every wish, except that of giving her her freedom. Obey me in this, in Filippo's name."

The command thus given was quickly repeated, and to Petronella there was given an extra charge of kindness.

"Her life will be required at thy hands," said the Necromancer to the woman, as he turned away.

The cold night air of the mountains struck a chill even to Gaspard's hardened frame, as the two issued from the amphitheatre.

"Art thou cold, and thou a bandit chieftain?" asked the Necromancer.

Gaspard was abashed and inwardly angry with himself for the weakness, and his companion continued:

"The winds upon Monte Gargano are colder than those that blow through the valleys; even the people in yonder town feel them more keenly than we do here."

As he spoke he pointed to the little hamlet of Bovino, which seemed to rest like an eyrie upon the rocky heights far above their heads.

"True, *Maestro*," Gaspard replied; "but when one has lately slept the night winds chill him more easily."

"Thou hast not slept, Gaspard. Thy brain has been too full of wild thoughts for sleep to come at thy bidding. Beware, chieftain, lest the punishment for false speaking which thou fanciest overtook the captive Signorita should fall upon thee also."

"Then she was so punished, *Maestro*?"

"I have not said it," was the curt answer.

The bandit's fierce and haughty mood forsook him in the presence of his strange companion. Humbled, cowed and awe-struck, he followed him meekly as though he walked in the wake of a superior being, as indeed he believed he did.

Out into the wilds of the mountains the two went. Guided by the Necromancer, they left the beaten track through the valley and ascended paths that even Gaspard himself had never trod.

"Whither goest thou, *Maestro*?" he asked, as, after a toilsome ascent of many feet, they halted for a few moments to breathe and rest.

"To the heights beyond, Gaspard. We are called to-night upon a strange mission. I am sent to summon thee to a meeting with Filippo."

"Nay, not with Filippo surely, *Maestro*! Is not Filippo dead?"

"Well, and if he were, why should he not still summon thee? Knowest thou not that the dead sometimes commune with the living, and that they also at times unfold to them the decrees of Fate?"

"Yes, *Maestro*; but I fear that Filippo's message will be one of angry reproach. His death was a fearful one; it was an unjust one, and it has not yet been avenged."

"Of that we will speak further anon, Gaspard. Let it suffice us now to obey, whether Filippo shall speak with mildness or with reproach."

"As thou wilt, *Maestro*."

Again the two walked on in silence. The heights they were now ascending were more rugged than any they had yet passed. The trees and underbrush which had hitherto been so dense now became more sparse, and at length they emerged upon an open space where not a tree nor a shrub grew.

The night winds that had blown so briskly about them even in the valleys now seemed miraculously stilled, for scarcely a breath stirred to fan their cheeks.

Well-nigh overcome by the violent exercise they had undergone in making the ascent, both Necromancer and bandit readily halted to rest when they reached the glade.

In the dim light Gaspard could see that his companion's face had assumed a more serious expression than it had worn when first they met. His voice when he spoke was lower, and everything about the strange man betokened a scene of more than ordinary import.

Gaspard was unconsciously awed by everything that had transpired since their departure from the amphitheatre.

Bold, reckless and unscrupulous as he was, he could not now refrain from an apprehension that some unearthly manifestation was about to take place.

When they reached the centre of the space, the Necromancer left his companion for a moment, and retired by himself for a short time. When he returned, Gaspard perceived that the manner which had before impressed him as being so serious, and even fearful, was increased.

"Gaspard!"

"Yes, *Maestro*, I am here."

"Art thou willing to receive the message I was sent to summon thee to hear?"

"I am, *Maestro*."

"That is well. A mortal may not refuse to listen to words from another world. Hast thou any fears, Gaspard?"

"None, *Maestro*."

"Nor any doubts?"

"None."

"Nor any rebellious thoughts in thy mind?"

"None."

"Wilt thou listen?"

"Aye."

"And remember?"

"Aye."

"And obey?"

"Aye."

"Again I say thou answerest well."

The Necromancer took the bandit by the hand and led him a pace or two away from where he stood; then turned him in such a manner that his face would be toward the moon.

"Not until the disk of yonder planet sinks behind the hills beyond us, can we begin the spells and incantations which will bring Filippo to us."

"'Twill not be long we shall have to wait, *Maestro*. She rides swiftly toward her setting now, and in a few moments yonder high mountain will hide her from our view."

While they were thus waiting, the Necromancer took a branch of witch-hazel, and with this magic wand traced a circle upon the ground around the spot where Gaspard stood.

When this was completed, he traced a second and a third, still leaving Gaspard in the centre of these concentric rings.

The third was completed just as the moon sank below the rocky horizon, and its pale light gradually fading from the landscape, they were ere long left in profound darkness.

Then it was that the Necromancer left his position outside the last magic circle, and stepped within that where he had left Gaspard. A short distance from where the chieftain stood he knelt upon the ground.

The spot was barren, arid and dry. Not a twig nor a branch was before him, not even a blade of withered grass, yet the Necromancer breathed upon the spot, he murmured many strange words over it, and poured upon the earth a mystic fluid, when suddenly a flame sprang up which for brilliancy Gaspard had never seen equalled.

For a moment he held his hands before his eyes to temper the bright light, so he should not cry out with pain; but ere long becoming accustomed to the glare, he turned with increased attention to watch the movements of the Necromancer.

"Filippo may not come until Sathanas permits," said he, turning toward Gaspard, for an instant. "The imps who do their master's bidding are ever reluctant to leave their haunts. So be not dismayed at the means I may employ to compel them."

Again he knelt before the fire, and poured another liquid upon the flames. From a pale yellow they now turned to a bloody, deep-dyed red, hissing and seething as though with anger.

The Necromancer rose to his feet, and in a loud voice and in a strange tongue uttered commands whose solemn, though uncomprehended import impressed the outlaw as never the voice of man had done before. Often the name of the author of evil sounded upon his ear, and each time it was uttered it seemed as if the earth also heard it, and trembled.

Noxious odors now filled the air, for while he spoke, the Necromancer flung upon the fire divers drugs and powders of potent power.

"Why dost thou not come?" the magician angrily exclaimed. "Art thou more fearful of the mountains of the Abruzzo than of the crypts of Santi Apostoli? Come hither, I say, or by the power which I hold over thee I will cause thee to regret thy delay!"

The flames rose higher and more angrily as the words were spoken. They hissed and glimmered as though they were themselves ethereal beings, and resented thus the Necromancer's commands.

Again the magician drew near, and cast upon the flames stronger and more offensive drugs. The smoke they caused rose in a dense black column, seeming to connect the heavens and the earth with this ominous pillar.

Straining his eyes in the darkness which this last phenomenon caused, Gaspard could see that from out this sable pillar forked tongues of light were quickly thrust, and as quickly withdrawn. He could hear also the distant sound of thunder; the earth seemed unstable under his feet, and he feared he should fall to the ground.

"They come!" the magician softly cried. "They come!" and again he threw fresh drugs upon the earth.

The rolling thunder drew nearer. It increased to loud, angry peals and discordant crashes. Hisses that sounded in Gaspard's ears more fearfully than the loudest thunder were also heard, and in the midst of it all the Necromancer stood calm and erect, as though in truth he had command of the very elements, and as though the highest powers of the air obeyed him.

Suddenly the adjacent mountains became illuminated with iridescent light. It leaped from crag to crag, from rock to rock. Ever coming nearer and nearer, it at length reached the outermost of the three circles within which Gaspard and the magician stood.

Then it resolved itself into beings whose grotesque and horrible shapes filled the outlaw with shuddering horror.

"Come no nearer!" said the Necromancer. "Come no nearer, I charge thee; but remain where thou art, and listen to my commands."

The shapes obediently paused in their mad gyrations, and became so still that Gaspard could have fully noted their appearance, had he not been so overcome with terror that he turned his face aside, so he should not see their hideous countenances and still more hideous figures.

"Listen!" said the Necromancer. "I command ye to return in a trice to Hades and bring thence Filippo, who formerly dwelt among these mountains, and who quitted earth with a score or more of his companions. Obey! Go, and return more speedily than thought, or a punishment thou mayest well dread shall be thine."

A pause of only a moment succeeded. Then the noises became still louder; the sulphureous smells, which had filled Gaspard's nostrils almost to suffocation, became still more offensive, and the quaking of the earth increased.

A moment or two only did this continue, when the sounds suddenly ceased.

"Look!" cried the Necromancer.

Gaspard fearfully raised his eyes. The huge black pillar, which a moment before he had seen rising in such a dense mass from the earth with its forked tongues of fire, was gone, and in its place stood Filippo!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TELL HER SO.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was a face more childlike than womanly that turned from the mirror with an impatient little gesture, saying:

"What is the good of it? He don't care."

The beautiful face clouded, the sweet lips quivered and settled into a little pout for a few moments, as she stood at the window watching for somebody's coming.

The door opened. She forced to her lips a smile to greet her friend, who said:

"How very becomingly you are dressed, Bessie. William will fall in love anew when he sees his blue-eyed Bessie this afternoon."

Her lips quivered, as she turned aside to hide the tears which filled her eyes.

The quick eye of her friend detected the grieved look. Clasping her arms around her, she asked:

"What is it, Bessie? Cast the shadow from your brow, love."

"And over yours, Katy? No, no. 'Tis nothing. I'm only a little nervous. Let us talk of the opera. What shall you wear to-night?" Bessie said, trying to force a cheerful tone into her words.

Another moment and a quick step was heard in the hall, and soon after William Upton, Bessie's husband, entered. The little wife raised her eyes, not expectant, but a little hopeful, to his. She knew she was looking prettily. Would he tell her so, or notice it?

Nay, not even by a smile showing his pleasure, but the same greeting as ever.

"Hurry up dinner, Bessie."

She turned and left the room, but not without revealing to her friend the wounded spirit. Ah! that little quivering lip had told the story.

As the door closed, Kate Heartwell said:

"How very prettily Bessie is looking! Blue is very becoming to her. Is it not, Will.?"

William Upton raised his eyes from the paper he had opened, and said:

"Excuse me, coz. What did you say?"

"I declare, Will., you have eyes and ears only for some business matter. I said Bessie was looking beautiful. But, of course, I don't suppose *you* noticed it," Katy replied, in not a very amiable tone.

William smiled a little, and then said:

"How strange women are! When a man is doing everything to make money for them, they grumble; and when he don't exert himself to do so, they grumble the more. There is no pleasing them. Of course Bessie looks pretty. That is, I presume she does. I did not notice particularly just now. But she is *always* beautiful to me."

"Well, then, why don't you tell *her* so?" snapped Kate; adding, "I know *I* should like a little less indifference from my husband if I had one, even if at the cost of a considerable loss of finances."

"Oh, nonsense, Kate! Bess knows I think she is more lovely than any woman I know. I wouldn't have married her if I had not," said William.

"Then *tell* her so sometimes."

"I have, a hundred times."

"Since you married her?" asked Kate.

"No; what is the use of such nonsense now? Bess knows it well enough."

"Knows what you *used* to think, you mean. And I know just this: when I please a person, particularly those I am seeking to please, I want them to tell me so," Kate said, starting up, as the dinner bell was ringing, and following William to the dining-room.

Kate knew Bessie had spent most of the forenoon in the kitchen, superintending and preparing something Will. was fond of.

Kate, hoping to draw forth some word of commendation, said:

"Bessie, you will spoil me so completely while here, I shall never again relish any ordinarily good cooking. You prepare everything so nicely. And these lemon pies—no wonder Will. is so fond of them—they are the best I ever tasted."

Again the blue eyes were raised, half hopeful, to her husband's, and again came words from him that Kate would have liked to have had choke him.

"Is it necessary, Bessie, that you should cook the dinners? If your cook is not capable, get one that is."

A goblet pressed to her mouth hid the quivering lips; and Kate, fearing her wrath would explode, excused herself and left the table.

Will., absorbed in thoughts of business, never for a moment imagined that he had said anything to grieve Bessie or enrage Kate.

His dinner finished, Willie was hurrying off, when Bessie said:

"You won't forget the opera to-night, Will.?"

"Oh, no. Be all ready; I will be back in time."

She looked as if she wanted to say something more, and William said:

"What is it, Bess? Speak quickly. I must be off."

"Nothing," she said.

He hurried off. A sigh escaped Bessie's lips, and turning from the door, she said:

"How different! In by-gone days, so very different! I wanted to ask him to bring me some buds to wear to-night. But he does not care how I look; and why should I?"

She went wearily up stairs into Kate's room; and although she entered smiling to Kate—who had for weeks been watching the merry face growing first pensive, then sad—it was such a sickly little smile that, catching her in her arms, she said:

"Oh, don't mind it, darling. Will.'s heart is all right; only he has a dreadfully ugly way of showing it. He loves you dearly; but he does not think about those little acts which please us."

"Little acts! They are great, indeed everything to me! Oh, Kate, if he would only say sometimes such things as he used to say, I would give even years of life to hear them. Nay, Kate, if he loved me as he should, as I do him, more and more the longer we live, he would show it—would tell me so. What would it cost him to say those words my heart is perishing for—words so little to him, so mighty to me? No matter whether I look sick or well, no comments. The same way when I fix anything to please him. He has grown indifferent, to say the least. And, O Heaven, I dare not think what may follow!"

Kate tried to turn her friend's thoughts, knowing just then that all argument to convince her otherwise would be useless. She determined, at some opportune time, to have a long talk with Will. on the subject.

Very beautiful Bessie looked that night, and Kate, whose eyes so often rested with admiration on her, thought William would surely make some comment. How could he help it?

He came home in good time, and when he entered their dressing-room with an exquisite little bouquet of buds and blossoms, Bessie's heart gave a bound of joy as she stretched forth her hands, exclaiming:

"How beautiful!"

"Yes; Fulton sent them to Kate."

He could not fail to see the disappointed look on the face that had brightened and grown pale so quickly, and said:

"If I had thought of it, I would have brought you some. But Kate will divide; there are enough for both."

O men! O husbands! flowers are some of the beautiful things of life, and women like to receive them; but the little act which tells your love is life itself. As necessary as the blessed sunshine, the gentle showers of summer to flowers, are words and acts which tell your love to the woman who loves you, without which the heart will wither and die, not always waiting to perish with the casket which holds it.

Kate's determination to have a serious talk with William Upton was prevented by a sudden call home. Subsequently a severe affliction banished from her mind the thought of Bessie's unhappiness.

William Upton became every day more absorbed in money making, and Bessie grew so miserable in the belief that she had lost her husband's love, that, in mere desperation, she plunged into a whirlpool of gayety and fashionable dissipation. Young, beautiful, accomplished, she won admiration always. Looks and words denied by her husband were lavished bountifully by other men.

Whisperings were heard of her unhappiness, and found their way to ready and evil hearts. Fuel was cautiously added to the burning fire: hints of another occupying the heart for whose love she would have died.

On one occasion William's thoughts were drawn from the counting-room long enough to express his admiration, in a very decided manner, of a beautiful woman, the widow of an old friend. His remarks were heard by one who made good haste to use them—one whose devotion to Bessie was known by every one, save her husband. Skillfully this man used his weapon, pricking her deeply, wounding so surely that the sore and bleeding heart was ready to flee to any one offering sympathy.

She listened, orphaned and childless; no aged ones with wise counsel to direct her; no caressing baby's arms to twine around, and hold her firm against temptation.

Words for which she had been starving were poured into her ear. Taught to believe her husband false to her, she promised to flee from him to one who vowed such devotion.

"To-morrow night, Bessie, my beautiful bird, your cage door shall be opened, and you shall be free. You will come with me then?"

"To-morrow! God pity me! Yes, to-morrow I *will* be free!" she said; yet darted back, with a fierce look, pale and trembling, from the arms that would have embraced her, and with a bitter, moaning cry, sank, as the door closed, to the floor, repeating the words again and again:

"God pity—God help me!"

A little while, and William would come. Throwing herself down, she feigned sleep. Soon he came, bent over her, and drew softly back. With guarded steps, he sought his couch. Not long before she heard him breathing softly, and knew he slept.

One long, last look, and then farewell. She stooped, and strained her eyes to see by the dimly burning light the features once all the world to her, and even then "too dear," she thought. He was dreaming; murmuring in low, soft tones, "My beautiful darling!" Again, "I *do* love you." The face so sad and softened a moment before, grew hard and bitter then, as she said:

"He dreams of *her*!"

A few little things to gather up, and she was ready. With her hand on the door, she turned for one more look—drawing back in the shade as she saw him start up, and looking wildly round, call:

"Bessie! Bessie, love! Where are you? Heavens! what a fearful dream! Oh, there you are. Thank God! I thought I had lost you!"

She had dropped her hat and shawl, and stood before him with a look so intense and eager it was almost fierce, as she asked, in a thrilling voice:

"*Would you have cared?*"

"Cared! Why, what ails you, love?"

"Tell me!" she cried.

"More than to lose my own life, Bessie."

"Saved! saved! Not lost! No—no; found! saved!" she cried, and sank fainting in her husband's arms.

Pity and help from the mercy-seat had answered her cry.

The foiled tempter received the next day a little note, saying:

"I am free now from all doubts and misgivings, and blessed with my husband's perfect love, to whom my inmost heart has been revealed."

She saw him no more. Yes, she had told her husband all. And within his clasping arms she learned to know how truly and solely he loved her.

In after days Bessie's life was truly happy. And although she needed no further assurances of her husband's love, he gave them to her.

And once, in years after, when a young friend of William Upton's, recently married, was telling him how lovely his young wife was, William said, in a manner and tone that made a deep impression:

"My young friend, tell her so. Say to her what you have said to me. Tell her so often, and take my word for it, you will give her a balm to retain forever her beauty. There is no cosmetic like it. And in the far distant future, when time may have whitened her sunny hair, and dimmed the brightness of her eye, the heart which you have kept still young, pure and happy, will illume the faded beauty of her face, which will still be to you the loveliest on earth. And then—why, then *tell her so*."

CHRISTMAS BELLS AND HEAVEN'S BELLS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

The Christmas bells have ceased their chimes,
And have ceased the hymns divine,
From myriad lips all over the world,
From the home or the templed shrine,
In answer meet to their music sweet,
That told of the wondrous birth
Of the Holy Child, while the Angels sung
Peace and good-will on the earth.

O the sacred joy that the nations thrilled!
O the clouds of incense curled!
O the family hearths where whitest flags
Of that Peace and Love unfurled!
How the hate that burned for a whole year turned
Into good-will in some hearts,
That a battle waged while their pulses beat
Through the roar of million marts!

The Christmas bells have ceased their chimes,
But their memory must not die:
O no! let the love that their music made,
Through the years that may lapse by,
Still an offering flame to the Babe that came,
'Till upon the saved soul swells
A "welcome" rolled by an Angel fold
From their Heaven's crowning bells.

◆

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

A SCENE IN INDIA.

Neva Wynde had retired to bed, as will be remembered, upon the marriage night of Lady Wynde and Craven Black, her thoughts all of her father and of his tragic fate in India. All day long she had thought of him with tender yearning, pity and regret, recalling to mind his goodness, nobleness, and grandeur of soul; and when night came, and she lay in her bed with the noise of revellers in the drawing-rooms and on the lawn coming faintly to her ears, she had sobbed aloud at the thought that her father had been so soon forgotten, and that his friends and tenantry were now making merry over the marriage of his widow to a man unworthy to cross the threshold of Hawkhurst.

And thus sobbing and thinking, she had slept, and in her sleep had dreamed that her father still lived, and that she saw him standing at the door of a hut among the far-off Indian hills, and that she heard his voice calling "Octavia! Neva!" And thus dreaming, she had awakened with a cry of terror, to ask of herself if it was only a dream.

It was not strange that she had thus dreamed, since all the day and all the evening her mind had been fixed upon her father. It would have been strange if she had not dreamed of him. Her dream had had the clearness of a vision, but Neva was not romantic, and although she slept no more that night, but walked her floor with noiseless steps and wildly questioning eyes, yet she convinced herself long before the morning that she had been the victim of her excited imagination, and that her dream was "only a dream."

But was it so? There is a philosophy in dreams which not the wisest of us can fathom. And although the cause of Neva's dream can be simply and naturally explained as the result of her agitated thoughts of her father, yet might one not also think, with less of this world's wisdom, perhaps, and more of tenderness, that the girl's guardian angel had placed that picture before her in her sleep, and so made recompense, in the joy of her dream, for her day of anguish and unrest?

Be this as it may, our story has to deal with actual facts, and has now to take a startling turn, perhaps not anticipated by the reader.

It was about one o'clock of the morning when Neva awakened from her dream.

It was then about seven o'clock—there being six hours difference in time—in India.

Among the cool shadows of the glorious Himalayas are many country seats, or "bungalows," occupied at certain seasons by exhausted English merchants from Calcutta, with their families, by army officers, and by others of foreign birth, enervated or rendered sickly by the scorching heats of the sea-coast or more level regions. They find "among the hills" the fresh air, and consequent health, for which otherwise they would have to undertake, at all inconvenience and expense, a voyage home to England or Holland.

These bungalows, for the most part, are cheaply built, of bamboo, with thatched roofs, and are encircled with broad and shaded verandas, always roofed, and sometimes latticed at the sides and grown with vines, to form a cool and leafy arcade, which serves all the purposes of promenade, sitting-room, music-room, dining-room, and even sleeping room, for there are usually bamboo couches scattered about, upon which the indolent resident takes his siesta at midday.

To one of these bungalows, a fair type of the rest, we will now direct the attention of the reader.

It stood upon an elevated plateau, with the tall mountains crested with snow in the distance. It was surrounded at the distance of a few miles by a range of hills, and between it and them lay miles of forest, which was an impenetrable jungle. Around the bungalow was a clearing of limited extent, and which was dotted with plumed palms, bamboo, and banyan trees.

The dwelling, frail like all of its class, was sufficiently well built for the climate. It was constructed of bamboo, was a single story in height, and was thatched with the broad leaves of the palm. A veranda, twelve feet wide, surrounded it. Its interior consisted of a broad hall, extending from front to rear, with two rooms opening from each side of it. The central hall, containing no staircase, was a long and wide apartment, which served as dining-room, sitting-room, and parlor, when required.

A little in the rear of this dwelling were two others, one of which served as the kitchen of the establishment, and the other as the quarters of the half-dozen native servants belonging to the place.

The bungalow which we have thus briefly described belonged to a Major Archer, H. M. A., and it was under its roof that George Wynde had breathed his last. It was from its broad veranda that Sir Harold Wynde had rode away for a last morning ride in India, upon that fatal day on which he had encountered the tiger of the jungle, in which encounter he was said to have perished.

At about seven o'clock of the morning then, as we have said, and about the moment when Neva awakened from her dream, Major Archer reclined lazily upon a bamboo couch in the shadow of his veranda. He was dressed in a suit of white linen, and wore a broad-brimmed straw-hat, which was tipped carelessly upon the back part of his head. He was reading an English paper, received that morning at the hands of his messenger, and indolently smoking a cigar as he read.

The Major was a short, stout, choleric man, with a warm heart and a ready tongue. He had greatly loved young Capt. Wynde, and still mourned his death, and he mourned also the tragic fate of Sir Harold.

"Not much news by this mail," the Major muttered, as he withdrew his cigar and emitted a cloud of smoke from his pursed lips. "And no hope whatever of our regiment being ordered back to England! We shall get gray out here in this heathenish climate, while the fancy regiments play the heroes at balls in country towns at home. The good things of life are pretty unevenly distributed any how."

He replaced his cigar and clapped his hands sonorously. A light-footed native, clad in loose white trowsers and white turban, and having his copper-colored waist naked, glided around an angle of the veranda and approached him with a salaam.

"Sherbet," said the Major sententiously.

The servant muttering, "Yes, Sahib," glided away as he had come.

The Major let fall his paper and reclined his head upon a bamboo rest, continuing to smoke. He had arisen hours before, had taken his usual morning ride to the house of a friend, his nearest neighbor, three miles distant, and had returned to breakfast with his wife and family, who were now occupied in one of the four rooms of the dwelling. The Major's duties for the day were now to be suspended until sunset, the intervening hours being spent in smoking, reading, sleeping and partaking frequently of light and cooling refreshments.

The sherbet was presently brought to the Major in a crystal jug upon a salver. He laid down his cigar and sipped the beverage with an air of enjoyment, yet lazily, as he did everything.

"I don't see how I should get along without you, Karrah," said the Major. "And you know it too, you dog. I pay you big wages as it is, and now I want to know how much extra you will take, and forego your present practice of stealing. I think I'd better commute. Mrs. Archer says you are robbing us right and left. What do you say?"

The native, a slim, lithe, sinewy fellow, with oblong black eyes, full of slyness and wickedness, a mouth indicative of a cruel disposition, and with movements like a cat, grinned at the Major's speech, but did not deny the charge. He had formerly been George Wynde's servant and nurse, then Sir Harold's attendant, and was now Major Archer's most valued servant. He had made himself necessary to the officer by his knowledge of all his master's requirements, and his exact fulfillment of them; by his skill in concocting sherbets and other cooling drinks; by his apparent devotion, and in other ways. Being so highly valued, he had every opportunity, in that loosely ordered household, of robbing his employer, and he was maintaining a steady drain upon the Major's purse which that officer now purposed to abolish.

"Come, you coppery rascal," said the Major good-humoredly, "what will you take to let the sugar and tea and coffee and the rest of the things alone, except when you find them on the table?"

"Karrah no make bargain, Sahib," said the native, rolling up his eyes. "Karrah do better as it is."

"No doubt; but I'm afraid, my worthy copper, that we shall have to part unless you and I can commute your stealings. Yesterday, for instance, I left five gold sovereigns in my other coat pocket, and last night when I happened to think of them and look for them they were gone. You took them—"

"No prove, Sahib—no prove!" said the native stolidly.

"I can prove that no one but you went into that room yesterday except me," declared the Major coolly. "You needn't deny the theft, even if you purpose taking that trouble. I know you took the money. You are a thief, Karrah," continued his master placidly and indolently, "and a liar, Karrah, and a scoundrel, Karrah; but your race is all tarred with the same stick, and I might as well have you as another. By the way, my fine Buddhist, if that is what you are, did you use to steal right and left from Captain Wynde?"

"Karrah honest man; Karrah no steal; but Karrah always same."

"Always the same! Poor George! Poor fellow! No wonder he died!" muttered the Major compassionately. "It was a consumption of the lungs by disease, and a consumption of means by a scoundrel. And did you take in Sir Harold in the same way?"

The Hindoo's face darkened, and an odd gleam shone in his eyes.

"Sir Harold no 'count gen'leman," he said briefly. "Karrah no like him. Three days 'fore tiger eat him, Karrah look into Sir Harold's purse and take out gold, only few miserable pieces, and Karrah look into Captain Wynde's trunk and take few letters and diamond pin. Sir Harold come in sudden, see it all; he eyes fire up; he seize Karrah by waistband and kick he out doors. Karrah hate Sir Harold—*hate—hate!*"

The indolent officer shrank before the sudden blaze of his servant's eyes, with a sudden realization of the possibilities of that ignorant, untaught and vicious nature.

"Why, you're a perfect demon, Karrah," exclaimed the Major. "You're a firebrand—a—a—devil! If you hated Sir Harold to such an extent, how did it happen that you continued in his service, and were even his attendant upon that last ride?"

The Hindoo smiled slowly, a strange, cruel smile.

"Oh," he said softly, "Karrah go back; Karrah say sorry; no know better. Sir Harold smile sad, say been hasty, and forgive. Karrah say he love Sir Harold. That night Karrah send messenger up country—"

He paused abruptly, as if he had said more than he had intended.

"Well, what did you send a messenger up country for, you rascal?"

"To Karrah's people, many miles away, to say that Karrah not come home," declared the Hindoo more guardedly. "Makes no difference why Karrah sent. Karrah stay with Sahib Sir Harold three days, and see him die. Then Karrah live with Sahib Major."

"I hope you don't hate me," said the Major, with a shudder. "I have a fancy that your hatred would be as deadly as a cobra's. If it were not for the tiger, I might think—But, pshaw! And yet— I say, Karrah, did you know that there was a tiger in that part of the jungle that morning?"

"Karrah know nothing," returned the Hindoo. "Karrah good fellow. He has enemies—they happen die, that's all. Karrah no set a tiger on Sahib. Karrah no friend tigers. Sahib have more sherbet?"

"No, nothing more. You may go, Karrah."

The Hindoo glided away around the angle of the veranda.

"I believe I'll have to let the fellow go," muttered the Major uneasily. "His looks and words give me a strangely unpleasant sensation. I shall take care not to offend him, or he may season my sherbet with a snake's venom. How he glared in that one unguarded moment when he said he hated Sir Harold! There was murder in his look. I declare I had a hundred little shivers down my spine. If Sir Harold had not been killed so unmistakably by a tiger, and if Doctor Graham and I had not seen the fresh tracks and the marks of the struggle, and if the tiger had not been afterward killed, I should think—I should be sure—"

An anxious look gathered on his face, and he ended his sentence by a heavy sigh.

"Strange!" he said presently, giving utterance to his secret thoughts; "my wife never liked this fellow, although I could see no difference between him and the rest. She insists that he is treacherous and cruel. I'll dismiss him, and tell her that I do so out of deference to her judgment. But the truth is, since I've seen the fellow's soul glaring out of his eyes, I sha'n't dare to sleep nights, for fear I may have offended his High Mightiness. I think it better for me that he should travel out of this."

He had just announced to himself this decision, when raising his eyes carelessly and looking out from the cool shadows of the pleasant veranda, he beheld a horseman approaching his bungalow, riding at great speed.

"It may be Doctor Graham coming up for a month, as I invited him," thought the Major, too indolent to feel more than a trivial curiosity at the sight of a coming stranger. "But the Doctor's too sensible to ride like that. It's either a green Englishman, with orders from head-quarters for me, or it's some reckless native. In either case the fellow's preparing for a first-class sunstroke or fever, or something of that nature. But that's his look-out. I've troubles enough of my own without worrying about him. It might be as well to finish my sherbet before losing my appetite under an order to return to my post. Oh, bother the army!"

He sipped his sherbet leisurely, not even looking again at the horseman, who came on swiftly, urging his horse to a last burst of speed. That the horse was jaded, his jerking, convulsive mode of going plainly showed. He was wet with sweat, and his head hung low, and he frequently stumbled. The horseman urged him on with spur and whip, now and then looking behind him as if he feared pursuit.

The Major did not look up until the horseman drew rein before the bungalow, and alighted at a huge stone which served as a horse-block. The stranger came slowly and falteringly toward the veranda, and then the Sybaritic Major set down his empty cup and glanced at him.

The glance became a fixed gaze, full of wildness and affright.

The stranger slowly entered the shade of the veranda and there halted, his features working, his form trembling. He looked weary and travel-stained. His haggard eyes spoke to the owner of the bungalow in a wild appeal.

With the peculiar movement of an automaton, the Major slowly arose to his feet and came forward, his face white, his eyes dilating, a tremulous quiver on his lips.

"Don't you know me, Major?" asked the stranger wearily.

"Great Heaven!" cried the Major, even his lips growing white. "It is not a ghost! I am not dreaming! Have the dead come to life? It is—*it is—Sir Harold Wynde!*"

CHAPTER XXII.

BACK AS FROM THE DEAD.

The stranger who stood upon the veranda of Major Archer's bungalow was tall and thin, with a haggard face, worn and sharp of feature, and full of deeply cut lines, such as a long-continued anguish never fails to graven on the features. His weary eyes were deeply sunken under his brows, and were outlined with dark circles. His hair was streaked with gray, and his long ragged beard was half gray also. His face was white like death, and unutterably wan. His garments were torn, and hung about his lank body in rags, save where they were ill-patched with bits of rags and vegetable fibres.

Was Major Archer right? Could this haggard and pitiable being be Sir Harold Wynde of Hawkhurst, one of the richest baronets in England, who was supposed to have perished in the clutches of a tiger?

It seemed incredible—impossible.

And yet when the heavy eyelids lifted from the thin white cheeks, and looked upon the Major, it was Sir Harold's soul that looked through them. They were the keen blue eyes the Major remembered so well, so capable of sternness or of tenderness, so expressive of the grand and noble soul, the pure and lofty character, which had distinguished the Baronet.

Yes, the stranger was Sir Harold Wynde—alive and well!

"You know me then, Major?" he said. "I am not changed, as I thought, beyond all recognition!"

He held out his hand. The Major grasped it in a mixture of bewilderment and amazement, and not without a thrill of superstitious terror.

"I—I thought you were dead, Sir Harold," he stammered. "We all thought so, Graham and all. We thought you were killed by a tiger. I—I don't know what to make of this!"

Sir Harold let go the Major's hand and staggered to the bamboo couch, upon which he sank wearily.

"He's not dead—but dying," muttered the Major. "Lord bless my soul! What am I to do?"

He clapped his hands vigorously. A moment later his Hindoo servant Karrah glided around upon the front veranda.

"Bring brandy—sherbet—anything!" gasped the Major, pointing at his guest. "He's fainting, Karrah—"

Sir Harold lifted his weary head and gazed upon the Hindoo. The sight seemed to endue him with new life. He leaped to his feet, and his blue eyes blazed with an awful lightning, as he pointed one long and bony finger at the native, and cried:

"Traitor! Viper! Arrest him, Major. I accuse him—"

The Hindoo stood for a second appalled, but as the last words struck his hearing he flung at the Baronet a glance of deadly hatred, and then turned in silence and fled from the bungalow, making toward the jungle.

Something of the truth flashed upon the Major's mind. He routed up his household in a moment, and dispatched them in pursuit of the fugitive.

Aroused by the tumult, Mrs. Archer came forth from her chamber. She was a portly woman, and was dressed in a light print, and wore a cap. Her husband met her in the hall and told her what had occurred. Restraining her curiosity, she hastened to prepare food and drink for the returned Baronet.

Meanwhile Sir Harold had sank down again upon the couch. The Major approached him, and said:

"You look worn out, Sir Harold. Let me show you to a room, where I will attend upon you. My men will capture that scoundrel—never fear. Come with me."

The Baronet arose and took the Major's arm, and was led into the central hall of the house, and into one of the four rooms the house contained. It was the room in which his son had died. The windows were closely shuttered, but admitted the air at the top. The floor was of wood, and bare. A bedstead, couch, and chairs of bamboo comprised the furniture.

At one side of the room were two capacious closets. One of these contained a portable bath-tub, a rack of fresh white towels, and plenty of water. The other contained clothes depending from hooks.

"You'll find your own suit of clothes there, Sir Harold," said the Major. "I intended to send them to England, but I am as fond of procrastination as ever. It's just as well though, now. You can take them home yourself."

Sir Harold sat down in the nearest chair.

"Home!" he whispered. "How are they—Octavia? Neva?"

"All well—or they were when I heard last."

"Tell me what you know of them?" And Sir Harold's great hungry eyes searched the Major's face. "They believe me dead?"

"Certainly, Sir Harold. Everybody believes you dead. And I am dying to know how it is that you are alive. Where have you been these fifteen months? How did you escape the tiger?"

The desired explanation was delayed by the appearance at the door of Mrs. Archer, who brought a jug of warm spiced drink and a plate of food. The Major took the tray, and shut his wife out, returning to his guest.

Sir Harold was nearly famished, and ate and drank like one starving. When his hunger was appeased, and a faint color began to dawn in his face, he pushed the tray from him, and spoke in a firmer voice than he had before employed.

"I have imagined terrible things about my wife and Neva," he said. "My poor wife! I have thought of her a thousand times as dead of grief. Do you know, Major, how she took the report of my death?"

"I have heard," said the Major, "she nearly died of grief. For a long time she shut herself up, and was inconsolable, and when she did venture out at last, it was in a funereal coach, and dressed in the deepest mourning. There are few wives who mourn as she did."

Sir Harold's lip quivered.

"My poor darling!" he muttered inaudibly. "My precious wife! I shall come back to you as from the dead!"

"Lady Wynde is heart-broken, they say," said the Major. "One of the men in our mess, a lieutenant, is from Canterbury and hears all the Kentish gossip, and he says people were afraid that Lady Wynde would go into a decline."

"My poor wife!" said Sir Harold, with a sobbing breath. "I knew how she loved me. We were all the world to each other, Major. I must be careful how she hears the news that I am living. The sudden shock may kill her. Have you news of my daughter also?"

"She was still at school when I last heard of her," answered the Major. "There is no more news of your home, Sir Harold. Your family are mourning for you, and you will bring back their lost happiness. You ought to have seen your obituaries in the London papers. Some of them were a yard long, and I'd be willing to die to-day if I could only read such notices about myself. That sounds a little Hibernian, but it's true. And your tenantry put on mourning, and they had funeral sermons and so on. By all the rules, you ought to have been dead, and, by the Lord Harry, I can't understand why you are not."

Sir Harold smiled wanly.

"Let me explain why I am not," he said. "You remember that I was taking my last ride in India, and was about to start for Calcutta, to embark for England, when I disappeared? Some three days before that I had a quarrel, if I might call it so, with the Hindoo Karrah—"

"I know it. He told me about it for the first time this morning."

"You understand then that I had incurred his enmity by kicking him out of this house? I found him stealing the effects of my dead son. He had also stolen from me. The letters he was stealing he was acute enough to know were precious to me, and there was George's diary, for which I would not have taken any amount of money. The scoundrel meant to get away with these, and then sell them to me at his own terms. I took back my property, and punished him as he deserved. I have now reason to believe he went away that night to his friends among the hills—"

"He did. He told me he did. But what did he go for?" cried the Major excitedly.

"You can soon guess. The next morning Karrah came back, professing repentance," said Sir Harold. "I reproached myself for having been too harsh upon the poor untaught heathen, and took him back. He accompanied me upon that last ride, and was so humble, so deprecating, so gentle, that I even felt kindly toward him. We rode out into the jungle. I was in advance, riding slowly, and thinking of home, when suddenly a monstrous tiger leaped out of a thicket and fastened his claws in the neck of my horse. I fought the monster desperately, for he had pinned my leg to the side of my horse, and I could not escape from him. We had a frightful struggle, and I must have succumbed but for Karrah, who shot at the tiger, wounding him, I think, in the shoulder, and frightening him into retreat."

"And so you escaped, when we all thought you killed!" cried the Major.

"My horse was dying," said the Baronet, "and I was wounded and bleeding. I thought I was dying. I fell from my saddle to the ground, groaning with pain. Karrah came up, and bent over me, with a devilish smile, and moistened my lips with brandy from a flask he carried. Then, muttering words in his own language which I could not understand, he carried me to his own horse, mounted, with me in his arms, and rode off in the direction in which we had been going, and away from your bungalow."

"The scoundrel! What was that for?"

"After a half-hour's ride, we came to a hollow, where three natives were camped. Karrah halted, and addressed them. They gathered around us, and then Karrah said to me, in English, that he hated me, that he would not kill me, but meant me to suffer, and that these men were his brothers, who lived a score of miles away up among the mountains. I was to be their slave. He transferred me to their care, disregarding my pleas and offered bribes, and rode away on his return to you. I was carried on horseback, securely bound, a score of miles to the north and westward. How I suffered on that horrible journey, wounded as I was, I can never tell you. A dozen times I thought myself dying."

"It is a wonder you did not die!"

"It is," said Sir Harold. "We went through savage jungles, and forded mountain torrents. We went up hill and down, and more than once leaped precipices. I was in a dead faint when we reached the home of the three Hindoos, but afterward I found how wild and secluded the spot was, and that there were no neighbors for miles around. Their cabin was niched in a cleft in a mountain, and hidden from the eye of any but the closest searcher. Had you searched for me, you would never have found me. It was in a rear hut, small and dark, with a mud floor, and windowless walls, that I have been a prisoner for fifteen months, Major. My enemies, for the most part, left me to myself, and I have dragged out my weary captivity with futile plans of escape. Ah, I have known more than the bitterness of death!"

"If we had only known it, we'd have scoured all India for you, Sir Harold," said the Major hotly. "We'd have strung up every native until we got the right ones. But that episode of the tiger—for it seems that the tiger was only an episode, coming into the affair by accident, but greatly assisting Karrah's foul treachery—threw us off the scent, and made us think you dead. Why did we not suspect the truth?"

"How could you? Don't reproach yourself, Major. My chiefest sufferings during these horrible fifteen months have been on account of my wife and my daughter. To feel myself helpless, a slave to those Hindoo pariahs, bound continually and in chains, while Octavia and Neva were weeping for me and crying out in their anguish, and perhaps needing me—ah, that was almost too hard to bear! Now and then Karrah came to taunt me in my prison, and to tell me how he hated me, and how sweet was his revenge. He told me that you had heard through a friend that my poor wife was dying of her grief. After that I tried, with increased ingenuity, to find some way of escape. Last night the three Hindoos went away—upon a marauding expedition, I think. After they had gone, one of the women brought me my usual evening meal of boiled rice. I pleaded to her to release me, but she laughed at me. She went out, leaving the door open, intending to return soon for the dish. The sight of the sky and of the green earth without nerved me to desperation. I was confined by a belt around my waist, to which an iron chain was attached, the other end of the chain being secured to a ring in the wall. I had wrenched my belt and the chain a thousand times, but last night, when I pulled at it with the strength of a madman, it gave way. I fell to the floor—unfettered!"

"You bounded up like an India rubber ball, I dare swear!" cried the Major, wiping his eyes sympathetically.

"I leaped up, and darted out of the door. There was a horse tethered near the hut. I bounded on his back and sped away, as the women came hurrying out in wild pursuit. I knew the general direction in which your bungalow lay. I rode all night, going out of my road, but being set straight again by some kindly Hindoos; and here I am, weary, worn, but Oh, how thankful and blest!"

The Baronet bowed his head on his hands, and his tears of joy fell thickly.

"You're safe now, Sir Harold," cried the Major. "I hear a hubbub outside. My fellows have got back, with Karrah, no doubt. I want to superintend the skinning him, and while I am gone, you can refresh yourself with a bath, and put on a suit of Christian garments. My wife is dying to see you. I hear her pacing the hall like a caged leopardess. Get ready, and I'll come back to you as soon as you have had a little sleep. You're among friends, my dear Sir Harold; and, by Jove, I'm glad to see you again!"

He pressed Sir Harold's hand, catching his breath with a peculiar sobbing, and hurried out.

His servants had returned, but Karrah had escaped. The Major indulged in some peculiar profanity, as he listened to this report, and then withdrew to his wife's cool room, and told her Sir Harold's story.

The Baronet, meanwhile, took a bath and went to bed. He slept for hours, awakening after noon. He shaved and trimmed his beard, dressed himself in the suit of clothes he had formerly worn, and which were now much too large for him, and came forth into the central hall of the dwelling. Major Archer was lounging here, and came forward hastily, with both hands outstretched, and with a beaming face.

"You look more like yourself, Sir Harold!" he exclaimed. "Mrs. Archer is out on the veranda, and is full of impatience to see you."

He linked his arm in the Baronet's, and conducted him out to the veranda, presenting him to Mrs. Archer, who greeted him with a certain awe and kindliness, as one would welcome a hero.

The little Archers were playing about under the charge of an ayah, and they also came forward timidly to welcome their father's guest.

Tiffin—the India luncheon—was served on the veranda, and after it was over, and the young people had dispersed, Sir Harold said to his host:

"When does the next steamer leave for England?"

"Three days hence. You will have time to catch the mail if you write to-day," said Major Archer.

"Write! Why, I shall go in her, Major!"

"Impossible, Sir Harold. You are not fit for the voyage," said Mrs. Archer.

"I must go," persisted the Baronet, in a tone no one could dispute. "Think of my wife—of my daughter. Every day that keeps me from them seems an eternity. Major, I was robbed by Karrah of every penny I possessed. Plunder was a part of his motive, as well as desire for revenge. I shall have to draw upon you for a sufficient sum for my expenses."

"It's fortunate, and quite an unprecedented thing with me, that I have a couple of hundred pounds in bank in Calcutta," said the Major. "I wish it were a thousand, but you're quite welcome to it, Sir Harold—a thousand times welcome. I appreciate your impatience to be on your way home. If it were I, and your wife was my Molly, I'd travel day and night—but there, I've said enough. I'll go to Calcutta with you, and see you off on the *Mongolian*. I wish I could do more for you."

"You can, Major. You can keep silence concerning my reappearance," declared Sir Harold thoughtfully. "My wife is reported to be dying of grief. If she hears too abruptly that I still live, the shock may destroy her. Major, I am going home under a name not my own, that the story of my adventures may not be bruited about before she sees me. I will not reveal myself to any one in Calcutta, nor to any one in England, before reaching home. I will go quietly and unknown to Hawkhurst, and reveal myself with all care and caution to Neva, who will break the news to my wife."

"Sir Harold is right," said Mrs. Archer. "Lady Wynde and Miss Wynde should not first hear the news by telegraph, or letter, or through the newspapers. Their impatience, anxiety, and suspense, after hearing that Sir Harold still lives, and before they can see him, will be terrible. The shock, as Sir Harold suggests, might almost be fatal to Lady Wynde."

"My wife is always right," said the burly Major, with a glance of admiration at his spouse. "Sir Harold, you cannot do better than to follow your instincts and my Molly's counsels. It is settled then, that you return to England under an assumed name, and see your own family before you proclaim your adventures to the world. What name shall you adopt as a 'name of voyage,' to translate from the French?"

"I will call myself Harold Hunlow," said the Baronet. "Hunlow was my mother's name. I am rested, Major, and if you can give me a mount, we'll be off at sunset on our way to Calcutta."

It was thus agreed. That very evening Sir Harold Wynde and Major Archer set out for Calcutta on horseback, arriving in time to secure passage in the *Mongolian*. And on the third day after leaving Major Archer's bungalow, Sir Harold Wynde was at sea, and on his way to England.

Ah, what a reception awaited him!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

Eighty-Seven Years under Woman's Rule.

We lately visited an aged clergyman, who has been for some years withdrawn from the duty of a rural charge, and now lives in town with a married grandniece. Talking of his unusually protracted life—for he is between eighty and ninety—he said very good-humoredly, "During all this long time I have never been out of the hands of women. First I was under the care of my mother, who guided me as she thought proper for fifteen years. Then I went to college, where I lived for some years in the charge of an aunt. Immediately after concluding my studies I got a call, and took up housekeeping in the parsonage with one of my sisters. I was in her hands for three years, and then married. My wife had the management of me for ten years, when she died, and my sister came back again. After a second experience of the sisterly sway I married again, and was under charge of the second Mrs. —— for fifteen years more. At her death a niece came to take care of me, but she had not reigned long, when she got a husband of her own to govern, and left me. After that I was handed over from one niece to another, till I left the parsonage an old gray-headed man, as you see me, and came here to be under the rule of this lady—pointing to the above-mentioned grandniece—so that, from the first day of my life till now, I may say that I have never been, for any space of time worth speaking of, exempt from woman's rule. They have done what they liked with me at all times during eighty-seven years, and will do so to the end of the chapter."

◆

The Dutiful Son.

When Phil. Sheridan had assumed command of the army in the Valley, and the movements betokened that hard fighting was in prospect,—in fact, when it had become certain that the new commander meant to attack and grapple with the foe,—a certain young staff officer, of Gen. Emory's corps, applied for leave of absence, giving as a reason that his father, whom he loved dearly, was lying at the point of death. When the petition reached Emory's hands he summoned the officer to his presence.

"How is this, sir?" demanded the old war-horse, in his gruff, crisp way.

The applicant restated his case. His father was dying, and his mother had sent for him to come home. His duty as a son led him to honor and revere his parents.

"Aye," replied Emory, with a grim smile, "you honor your father and your mother *that your days may be long in the land!*"

The youth's request was not granted; and he now has the proud satisfaction of telling that he fought at Opequan and at Cedar Creek.

C.

◆

SILENCE.—Forbear to sport an opinion on a subject of which you are ignorant, especially in the presence of those to whom it is familiar. If it be not always in your power to speak to the purpose, it certainly is to be silent; and though thousands have remembered with pain their garrulity, few have had reason to repent their silence.

◆

HONESTY.—There is no man but for his own interest hath an obligation to be honest. There may be sometimes temptations to be otherwise; but all things considered, he shall find it the greatest ease, the highest profit, the best pleasure, the most safety, and the noblest fame, to be honest.

BUYING CROWN JEWELS.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Plucking a thorn from the traveller's path,
Turning away a neighbor's wrath;
Stretching a hand toward the needy soul,
Pointing the way to the distant goal;
Lifting a fallen brother up,
Sweetening the draught in the bitter cup;
Planting sweet flowers on a lonely grave,
Seeking a single soul to save;
Sowing the seed 'gainst the Spring-tide rain,
Watching in love by the bed of pain;
Heeding the orphan's plaintive cry,
Wiping the tears from sorrow's eye;
Shunning to act the liar's part,
Loving the truth with a fervent heart;
Guarding from ill a friend's good name,
Burying deep the tale of shame;
Working to earn the bread we eat,
Climbing the hill with patient feet;
Dealing with men in an honest way,
Seeing Heaven's light in the darkest day;
Bidding the poor to the ample feast,
Treating with kindness the poor dumb beast;
Hoping for all things good and true,
Trusting to God in what we do;
Earning true riches as on we go—
Buying crown jewels as pure as snow.

* * *

WIDOW WOOD.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

I don't say that brother Ben.'s widow wasn't good looking, for her age and her size. Then, too, she had a pretty penny left her. Ben. was always lucky in business. And she might have married very well, if she wanted to change her condition; but, you see, Margaret Ann was a fool—she, a widow of forty, to set her cap at young Sam. Spencer, who was only twenty-four! If I *was* her brother-in-law, and if Ben. *had* said to me, as he did, "Richard, always be kind to Margaret Ann," I couldn't help seeing that. The fact of the matter is, that, as a general thing, widows do make fools of themselves oftener than girls.

In this case, I admit, age was the only obstacle. Sam. was a good young man—above selling himself to a woman old enough to be his mother, for her money-bags. Sam. was clerk in the store. I was poor Ben.'s partner. I'd tried to buy the widow out. I'd said, over and over again, "Margaret Ann, you have plenty, and to spare; why not retire?" But, you see, she wouldn't. Ben. had left his share of the business to her, and she wouldn't drop it. After a while I found out the reason. It was Sam. Spencer.

That was why she liked to sail about the store in her dead black silks; that was why she was always finding some excuse to haul down that part of the stock he had in hand, mixing everything up, and giving him no end of trouble.

You see, I couldn't help it. The concern paid, and the Widow Wood owned just as much of it as I did. If I'd said, "Margaret Ann, go home," she could have said, "I've a right here." That was it. She never waited on a customer. She never did anything but bother and pry. She had no children to occupy her, and she brought her pet white poodle along with her. "So lonesome," she said she was, "in the big house opposite, and that was why she had us come to tea so much, of course."

Well, this went on for nearly a year. Big eyes at Sam., sweet smiles, soft speeches! I used to wonder whether old Ben. knew how soon he had been forgotten. To be sure he was sixty when he died, and a bald-headed, stoop-shouldered man, with solemn ways about him: but she'd been his wife for twenty-three years, and though I'm a bachelor, I know what feelings ought to be. And Ben. was my brother too. I hope it wasn't wicked of me to make up my mind to put an end to her capers, as far as Sam. went, and to tell him that we wanted a young lady as cashier, and what not, and that if Lilly Rathbone could leave Grigg and Grater, I'd give her the place. Sam. was in love with Lilly: I knew that; but Margaret Ann had never seen her.

"Margaret Ann," says I, one day, "we'll have a new cashier to-day. We need one, and I've engaged one."

"Well," says Margaret Ann, "perhaps we do. I hope he's a nice young man, and good looking. Good looks attract custom."

"I'm glad you coincide with me," says I. And I laughed to myself, for I knew Margaret Ann was thinking of some one else to flirt with. But I said nothing.

It was fun to see her face change when she saw Lilly behind the counter next day. And she gave it to me in the private office, I can tell you. She hated females about a store, and she didn't like Lilly's looks. I could laugh at her, however, there. I had good references with Lilly, and I had signed a written agreement with her for six months. She was to be cashier, you see, as I told you. Margaret Ann couldn't help herself, and I suppose she knew it, for she said nothing after that, and Sam. and Lilly were as happy as young birds. I believe he proposed to her behind my counter: I know he did it somewhere, and I know he was accepted.

"Lord bless you," says I to myself, "and help you build your nest." I'm not crusty, if I am a bachelor.

A few days after, I found Margaret Ann walking the office in a towering rage, with her face flaming.

"Richard," says she, "a woman is always right about another woman. Men admire a pretty face so, that they are blinded by it. It was always so with Mr. Wood. Many a time he's thought a woman everything that was splendid until I've proved that she wasn't, by telling him things. Now I've found out your Lilly Rathbone. She's exactly what I thought—exactly!"

"Well, what is it?" says I.

"No better than she should be," says Margaret Ann. "I saw her kiss Sam. Spencer behind the counter this blessed morning."

"And he didn't want her to, I suppose, and hollered for help?" says I.

"You know what men are," says she; "of course he kissed her back."

"Didn't he kiss her first?" says I.

"Well, she let him, any how," says she.

"Well," says I, "I suppose you used to kiss Ben. after you were engaged, if not before."

"What has that to do with it?" says she. "Why, they—at least— Did *he* propose her coming here, Richard?"

"No," said I; "but they are engaged, Margaret Ann."

"Don't believe it," said she.

"It's gospel truth," said I.

And then—well, I didn't mind it; it didn't hurt me a bit—but then that woman turned around and slapped me in the face, she was so hopping mad.

"Such actions in a respectable store! You depraved brute!" says she; and marched out, and didn't come back for a week, for which I was truly thankful.

When she did come, it was all smiles and amiability; and she talked to Lilly, and she smiled at Sam., and she really did come out beautifully, considering. Lilly took a great notion to her.

"What a nice, pleasant lady Mrs. Wood is," she said, as we were folding things up that night; "and so pretty too, for her age. I think she's splendid."

"Glad you like her," said I.

"Dear me!" said she, with her head under the counter.

"Sister-in-law, you know," said I; "one of the family; it won't do to praise her too much."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of what you said, Mr. Wood," said she. "I'm so surprised about my key. I'm sure I hung it here. A little brass door key, with a nick in the handle and a piece of pink ribbon tied to it. I can't think where it is gone."

Well, we both looked everywhere. We unrolled packages and peeped into boxes, and poked down cracks in the floor. Lilly kept worrying about getting a locksmith to fit another before she could get in, and said that Rose was always so tired.

Rose was her sister. The two were orphans, and kept house together in one little room of a respectable tenement house.

"I've always had tea ready before Rose got in," said Lilly; "but to-night she'll have to wait."

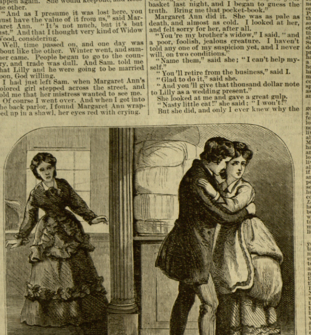
It's odd how we remember little things sometimes. Perhaps the girl's pretty puzzled face, and her graceful motions as she ran about looking for the key, impressed this one on my mind. At all events we did not find the notched key tied with pink ribbon, and Lilly went home without it. I told Margaret Ann about it when I saw her next, and she inquired very politely of Lilly as to the end of the affair, when she next saw her. The key was never found, but Lilly said she had had two made, so that such a thing could never happen again. She would keep one, and Rose the other.

"And as I presume it was lost here, you must have the value of it from us," said Margaret Ann. "It's not much, but it's but just." And that I thought very kind of Widow Wood, considering.

Well, time passed on, and one day was about like the other. Winter went, and summer came. People began to go to the country, and trade was dull. And Sam. told me that Lilly and he were going to be married soon, God willing.

I had just left Sam. when Margaret Ann's colored girl stepped across the street, and told me that her mistress wanted to see me.

Of course I went over. And when I got into the back parlor, I found Margaret Ann wrapped up in a shawl, her eyes red with crying.



"Anything happened?" says I.

"Yes," says she, "I'm afraid so. I'm so sorry."

"Dear me! Do mention the facts," says I.

"Well," says she, "I can hardly bear to do it; but—who has a chance at the safe besides you and me?"

"Nobody but Lilly Rathbone," says I.

"You are sure?" says she.

"Why, of course," says I.

"Ah! Well," says she, "perhaps there's another way out of it. May be you've had occasion to use that money of mine. I mean the thousand-dollar bank-note that I put in there, in a red pocket-book, last week."

"No," said I. "Of course I'd have spoken of it. It was your private money."

"It's gone, Richard," said she. "You saw me look in the safe to-day?"

"Yes," says I.

"Well," says she, "it was gone then. I couldn't bring myself to speak of it. You see, a girl like that has so many temptations; going to marry, and all. Richard, promise me you won't have her arrested, or anything, if it is her."

"It's not," I cried. "Besides, it was your money. You would be the prosecutor of any thief."

"Dear me, yes," says she, "and I'll let her go; but I must get it back, and she must leave the store."

"How can you think so ill of the girl?" said I. "Why don't you suspect me? I'm ever so much more doubtful a character than she is."

"You are my brother-in-law," said Margaret Ann. "Now listen to reason. Come to the store with me, and we'll search. If we don't find it, I shall charge Lilly with the theft to-morrow, and if she don't confess, get a search-warrant out for her rooms. I'll be very kind, but I can't lose a sum like that."

She cried again. I did really feel that she was in great trouble. We went to the store again, and searched the safe, but the money was gone. Margaret Ann had the number in her pocket-book. It was easy to identify it, and besides, a poor girl like Lilly did not have thousands lying about loose. I confessed to myself that the poor thing was in a suspicious position, and I said that if she should prove guilty, my faith in human nature was gone.

"Mine too," said Margaret Ann. "I've come to like her so. And then, poor Sam.!"

I went home to tea with my sister-in-law, but we had not much appetite. She promised not to come to the store until closing hour, and to be very merciful, and give the girl every chance.

And so we parted. I arose to say good-night, and came around the table to shake hands with Margaret Ann, when, being but a clumsy old bachelor, not used to woman's fixings, my coat caught in a little wicker work sewing basket on long spider legs, and overset it. Out tumbled cotton and buttons and tape, and I stooped down to pick them up, when among the litter I saw a key—a brass door key, with a nick in it, and a long piece of pink ribbon tied to the handle. It was a very little thing, but it made my blood run cold.

If that was the key Lilly had lost, what was it doing there? I didn't dare to look at my sister-in-law. And I walked the floor all night, but by morning my mind was made up.

At nine o'clock I met that boy and girl at the store, and told them I should be gone all day. In ten minutes more I stole Lilly's key from under the counter, and went out. I went to her house—to her little room on the third floor, and entered it like a thief. It was very poor and very bare, but very neat and clean; and there was a closet in it, with a few dresses hanging up on pegs, and a bonnet box on a shelf.

Into that closet I went, and there I sat down on an old trunk and waited. I heard a queer old clock ticking in the room. I heard it count the hours, ten, eleven, twelve. And I kept saying to myself:

"If you are a wicked, suspicious old fool, Richard Wood, Lord forgive you!"

But I waited still, and just as the long black hands pointed at half past one, I heard a knock at the door—such a knock as ladies sometimes give with a parasol handle; such a knock as my sister-in-law always gave at the office door.

I drew my closet door tight shut, and put my eye to a crevice in it.

There was another knock—a pause; and then I heard the key turn in the lock, and saw the door open and my sister-in-law come in. She looked about her, shut the door, relocked it, and stole across the room. Then—God forgive the woman; I suppose she was mad with jealousy—she lifted up the mattress of the neat little bed in the corner, and taking a red pocket-book from her bosom, thrust it under, drawing the quilt well down about the bed afterward.

"I hardly think you'll marry Sam. Spencer after all, Miss Lilly," she said aloud, with a wicked toss of her head. "I've outwitted you."

"Not quite," said I., "Margaret Ann, there are two words to that matter."

I walked out of my closet, and stood with my back against the outer door. She knew herself trapped, but her wicked tongue had its way still.

"*So*, you're in the habit of coming here!" she said. "Nice young ladies, certainly."

"I never came here before," said I, "and you know that; but I've been here all day, waiting for you. I saw Lilly's key in your basket last night, and I began to guess the truth. Bring me that pocket-book."

Margaret Ann did it. She was as pale as death, and almost as cold. I looked at her, and felt sorry for her, after all.

"You're my brother's widow," I said, "and a poor, foolish, jealous creature. I haven't told any one of my suspicion yet, and I never will, on two conditions."

"Name them," said she; "I can't help myself."

"You'll retire from the business," said I.

"Glad to do it," said she.

"And you'll give that thousand dollar note to Lilly as a wedding present."

She looked at me and gave a great gulp.

"Nasty little cat!" she said; "I won't!"

But she did, and only I ever knew why the Widow Wood was so generous to Lilly Rathbone on her wedding-day, or why she started for Europe on the very next steamer that sailed from New York, and still remains there.

* * *

SCIENCE.

Upwards of seventy-five thousand dollars will be required to defray the expenses of the scientific expeditions which the British government has determined to send out to various parts of the world to observe the next transit of Venus, which will occur in 1874. The whole of this sum has already been granted, on the application of the Astronomer Royal, who has decided that the equipment of apparatus for celestial photography alone will cost nearly twenty-five thousand dollars. The German astronomers have taken measures for dispatching observers to points in China and Persia. As our own government has established a precedent for affording aid to science, in appropriating a large sum for Captain Hall's Arctic expedition, we hope the United States will be fitly represented by a well provided and thoroughly organized corps of astronomers on the occasion of the transit in 1874.

Dr. Alfred Meadows, of the St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, in a recent address which he delivered before that institution, took occasion to make some unjust and foolish comments upon Professor Tyndall's able essay on the scientific use of the imagination. In the report of his lecture, however, we find the following good anecdote: "A lady once asked a distinguished member of the French Academy of Sciences, 'What is the use of being an academician if you can't tell what comets are made of?' To which the learned man replied, 'Madame, that I may be able to say I don't know.'"

A letter from Tiflis, the capital of the Russian province of Georgia, written by Dr. Gustav Radde, the Director of the Museum of Natural History in that town, states that in August last he succeeded in ascending the Great Ararat to a height of fourteen thousand two hundred and thirty-three feet above the level of the sea. He was accompanied by a young geologist, and the journey occupied more than three months. He describes the collection of plants which they made as splendid.

The beautiful phosphorescence of the water of the Red Sea was much admired by the members of the eclipse expedition which went from Europe to India in December last. It was peculiarly brilliant when the hot water from the steamer's condenser was poured out into the sea, a phenomenon which Mr. H. N. Moseley, in a letter to *Nature*, attributes to the fact that the minute animals in the water were probably killed by the heat, and in the act of dying emitted flashes of superlative brilliancy.

The warmth-preserving qualities of turf were well established by a series of observations made in France not long since. When the ground was thickly covered with snow, the temperature of denuded soil and of turf-covered soil, at equal depths, was carefully compared; and in every instance the temperature of the turfed soil was above the freezing point, and that of the naked soil below it.

A letter from Mr. J. T. Moggridge to the Entomological Society describes a species of Italian ants which, in the latter part of Autumn, harvest the seeds of various plants in chambers, sometimes hollowed out of the solid rock. He believes that they collect these supplies for food, though he has never observed them actually eating the seeds.

The influence of color on vegetation was the subject of a paper lately communicated to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. Bert. His conclusions are, that any color taken alone is injurious to plants; that green is nearly as fatal as total darkness; and that red is less hurtful than green, blue less hurtful than red, and yellow less hurtful than blue.

An anvil weighing 125 tons was recently cast at Newcastle-on-Tyne under the direction of Sir William Armstrong, the inventor of the celebrated gun which bears his name. This anvil is to be used with a twenty-ton forge hammer, and is the largest iron casting ever made. It will be used in forging the great thirty-five ton Armstrong gun.

In a case now pending in the United States Circuit Court in this city, Prof. Silliman of Yale College has been examined as a scientific expert, on the subject of combustion; and one of his answers to a single question occupies more than three pages of the last number of the *American Chemist*.

The venerable Archdeacon Pratt of Calcutta recently died in that city. He was well known as a writer on scientific subjects, and had acquired considerable distinction by reason of his researches in regard to the structure of the earth.

A furnace for burning petroleum has been invented in France. It affords great heat, produces no smoke or ashes, and is described by M. Sainte-Claire Deville, the eminent chemist, as admirable.

The son of Dr. Livingstone, who is to form one of the party soon to leave Zanzibar in search of his father, was born in the wilds of Central Africa. He is about twenty years old.

The new explosive agent, dynamite, is growing in favor among miners in Germany. It is said to be considerably more economical than gunpowder.

The steam-jet has at last been successfully applied to the ventilation of collieries in England.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NEED OF COMFORT says: "Have you any comfort to offer to one who tries to do good, but from whose efforts evil is nearly always the result? I feel as if I were just one too many in this wide, wide world. The cause is this: Frequently I think I will do something which will please a person, but, alas! when the deed is done, what I supposed would be a pleasure to them is pain to me. My efforts are rewarded by my being called 'officious' or 'impudent.' Now all this from persons who are nearest, but to whom I know I'm not the dearest on earth. Do you think we will be punished in the 'dread hereafter' for the evil we did not intend? Is there no niche that I might creep into, and get out of every body's way? I try to comfort myself with the thought that as all women have a mission to fulfill on earth, I may yet do some good, but I have nearly reached the age of twenty-one, and my mission has never made itself known." In the first place, you will only be held accountable for the evil you intended. Probably you are over-sensitive, and impressed with the idea that *you* have to find a sphere. But you are *somewhere* now. Fill that sphere, and if there is any other or wider for you, you will be lifted into it in due time. You speak of your age—twenty-one—as if you should have been pretty well through your "mission." Settle two things well in your mind. Most people who do anything worth doing have a good long time for preparation, and do not always know just when they have got into their mission; for a "mission" is not like a railway journey, in which you can tell by the guide how many miles you have gone, and how many you have to go. And secondly, the great mass of the human race never have what girls under twenty-one count a "mission"—something very definite and very splendid—but they simply do their duties day by day, as well as they can, at their best times. Try this plan, and see if it does not give you comfort.

HOMO says: "Being a regular reader of your good paper, I wish to ask you for a little advice. I am a young man of liberal education, having a good profession, and belong to one of the 'first families.' I love, and am engaged to, a young lady who is poor and not well educated, and depends upon her needle for a living. There is something that affects the respectability of her parents, but she is a true Christian girl. My parents and friends are very much opposed to my having anything to do with her. I have been thrown among the best of company all my life, but have never loved any one as I do her. It seems as if I could not live without her; but if I marry her, I will disappoint all my friends. Will you please tell me what to do, and if you think it would be an unequal match?" To give an intelligent reply, we should know both. There are persons of the "first families" on whom a respectable sewing-girl would be sadly thrown away. If you love her and have gained her love, why, there is but one course open to you. Marry her. Do you expect the *Ledger* to advise you, HOMO, *a man*, to sneak out of an honorable engagement—made with your eyes open—because it will disappoint your friends? Many young women with few early advantages, when the opportunity is given them, acquire with great rapidity the manner, ease and grace which, even in the first families, are occasionally "conspicuous by their absence."

CORA JONES (New York) says: "Having read your valuable paper a long time—my parents have taken it for seventeen years—and admiring it very much, especially the column devoted to correspondents, I come to you with a matter of some importance to myself. I earnestly hope you will not throw it aside as unworthy of your notice. Some time ago, seeing a number of my friends and acquaintances flirt, and thinking it simple amusement, I did so also, not with the handkerchief, but merely the eyes. Not long since I heard it was very wrong to do so. I then stopped it. Now, dear Mr. Editor, would you please tell me if it is wrong for a girl to flirt in any manner, and what a gentleman thinks of one that does so. Remembering that the gentleman either begins the flirtation, or takes part in it." For a modest girl to affect interest in a man where she does not feel it, or to admit of such displays as imply a mutual understanding where there is none, is indelicate and unwomanly. To call it immoral in every case would be too strong, because it is often done in thoughtlessness, but it is always undignified. There are silly persons, of course, of both sexes, and male flirts are often caught by female; but sensible gentlemen generally say of such, "They are very good to flirt, or dance, or fool with, but to marry—that's another affair."

DAVID CAMP (Brooklyn) says: "After perusing your valuable paper for over fourteen years, I am obliged to come to you for advice. My case is this: I am a young, healthy and strong man, willing and able to work, and work hard, but without any means, owing to misfortunes. By being an honorably discharged officer of the navy, I am entitled to a grant of land in the far West, and should like to claim it and work it; but how I am to do so I know not. Can you give me any advice? Are there not societies who would assist a young man; and if so, where are they?" Your wisest course is to communicate directly with head-quarters, whence you had your discharge. If your claim is good, you have no need, so far, of help from any societies. We are not aware of any that contemplate such special work as your case suggests. It must be almost the only object for which there is none, and we only hope this reference will not suggest it to some one with a natural turn for being "secretary."

DRUGGIST (Antioch, Ga.) says: "Please let me know in your answers to correspondents if there would be any difficulty in a graduate of the New York College of Pharmacy getting a position as prescriptionist in an apothecary's shop in New York city; and what would it cost an economical young man to pass through and graduate; one that has been in the drug business for three years? Also, please let me know what the salary of a first-class prescriptionist is in New York?" Much depends on address and manner, as well as professional competency. Salaries vary indefinitely; a young man of prudent character, and capacity to adapt himself to new circumstances, could live on five hundred dollars a year while going through the medical school, and many with much less pass through by doing some suitable work.

F. S. R. (New Brighton, Penn.) incloses an advertisement of a comb with a grand name that curls straight hair instantly, and straightens out curled hair; and wishes to know if it is proper to use it. Of course it is. It can do no harm to anybody; and if it succeeds we recommend that it be patented. It will have an enormous sale. It will save barbers and also private persons much trouble. It will save mustached persons "infinite pains." It will be invaluable to those who profess to put "curled hair" in the sofas and chairs, and who sometimes fail to do it. It will "go" among the colored brethren "and sistern" with astonishing rapidity. It will be another "Amendment" to them. Buy it, and try it, and tell us the result.

M. M. K. (Warrensburg, Mo.) says: "Will you please inform me, through your Notices to Correspondents, whether those grapes spoken of in the Bible as found by the spies of Moses in the valley of Eshcol were ever brought to this country and grown? I have read that in England a bunch was grown to weigh nineteen pounds; they were called Syrian grapes. If these grapes were ever grown on this continent please tell me where they are to be had, and oblige very much." Various high-sounding names have been given to particular kinds of vine, and grapes, including "Eshcol;" but the name no more identifies them with those found by the spies than artichokes are identified with the Hebrew capital by being called "Jerusalem."

NELLIE B. (Milwaukee, Wis.) says: "I have taken the liberty of asking you a few questions, which I hope you will be kind enough to answer in your next. What is the meaning of the word 'accepe' on the envelope inclosing a note from a young gentleman? Also, the words 'accept' and 'address,' used in the same place? By answering the above, you will confer a great favor on a constant reader of your valuable paper." The first word you write may be read "accipe," which means "receive;" or it may be "accepi," which means "I have received." As to the meaning of the other words on the envelope, we should take them to mean that the sender was either affected or distracted.

J. C. P. (Philadelphia) says: "Will you be so kind as to answer the following question, through your valuable paper: By what means can a person change his name in this State? And if changed in this State, will it be lawful all over this country? Or can any one make an assumed name lawful by going by said name any certain number of years?" The only lawful way in which a man can have his name changed is by making application to the Legislature of the State in which he resides to change it. If the Legislature grants his petition and changes his name, the change holds good throughout the United States.

H. says: "You will greatly oblige a news agent by informing him, through the columns of your valuable paper, what books to read to get a thorough knowledge of medicine. By doing this you will confer a favor upon one who has been a subscriber to your paper for a long while." Youmans and Draper had better be read for elementary physiology; then Carpenter or Müller; and for anatomy, Wilson. After you have mastered these, consult the authorities of the medical college whose diploma you mean to seek, and be sure it is not a *bogus* affair.

J. N. (Greenbrier, West Virginia) says: "Please give me information on the following, in your answers to correspondents, and oblige an old reader of the *Ledger*. Do passenger ships, plying between Europe and America, keep a regular physician on board? and if they do, what salary does the physician generally get, and are such situations difficult to obtain?" Steamers have a surgeon attached to the vessel, and so do some sailing craft. The pay is not high, and the situation is not easy to obtain.

AN OLD READER (New York) says: "Please inform me why people use the word 'alto,' meaning the highest female voice, when the word properly means the highest male voice. By informing me through your columns, you will greatly oblige." If they do it, it is because they willfully neglect their Webster, who says *alto* is *now* the part sung by the *lowest* female voices, between the tenor and soprano. But musical persons are not particular about their words, even "in meeting."

ETHEL BEAUMONT (Winnebago Co., Ill.) says: "Would you please inform me in your Notices to Correspondents of the meaning in English of the Latin words *Præstare fidem morti*?" The words mean, "to answer for the faith to death," though possibly they might be employed to convey the idea of preferring death to the sacrifice of the faith.

READY WORKER says: "How shall I get a place? I've answered advertisements, advertised myself, bothered all my friends, been in store and inquired for situation, and in fact done all I can think of, still no place. What next? Please answer." Acquire the obvious requisites for filling a place, and try again. A good many ready workers are wanted.

TELEGRAPH says: "Please give me, in your Notices to Correspondents, the correct pronunciation of the name 'Guinever.' Many thanks for the pleasure and information gained from my favorite paper." The name is pronounced *Gwin-e-ver*—accent on the first syllable. Glad that TELEGRAPH is pleased with the *Ledger*. Send it on.

AMBITION (Baton Rouge, La.) says: "Having been a reader of your valuable paper for some years, I wish to avail myself of your learning and ability to assist me in accomplishing a long-desired object. My case is as follows: I left home penniless, and I may say friendless, at the age of sixteen; am now twenty-six. During that time I have, by industry and hard work, earned for myself a name, and in addition a fortune of fifteen thousand dollars. I am happily married; in fact, think I have good cause to be thankful for my situation in the world; but with all this, I have a higher ambition than to be simply rich, and that ambition is to be a thorough English scholar. I have a good practical knowledge of business, and am thought to be a first-class business man in our community; but when I come in contact with learned men I feel a deficiency in nearly all branches of science and learning, and I come to you to direct me how to supply that deficiency. I wish a thorough knowledge of arithmetic, grammar, and geography, all the sciences, and a better knowledge of the Scriptures than I have. Can you recommend what is the best course for me to pursue? What are the best books on these subjects to buy, and the method I ought to adopt in studying, as I have only evenings to devote to that purpose? Will you also recommend some of the best books to read for the improvement and strengthening of the mind?" For the Scriptures you only need a good reference Bible and such a book as Angus' Hand-book, which will direct you to other works, if necessary for you. Procure Guyot's geographical series, a school grammar, and Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, for reference. The reading of a few good books, such as Chambers' Cyclopedia of English Literature, will introduce you to the authors you require. You had better read a few good books than many second-rate. A good cyclopedia will be found most useful to you after a little.

INTERESTED (Shawhaw Station, K. C. R. R.) says: "Supposing two brothers to come to this country from England, and their father dying and leaving an immense estate, would they be equal heirs, or would the elder brother alone inherit his father's wealth? And in case the elder brother alone inherits the wealth, and having never put forward his claims, is now dead, could the descendants of the younger brother then claim an equal share with the descendants of the other? And if so, what is the best plan to pursue in tracing the matter up? These questions are asked in the interest of heirs in their great-great-grandfather's estate, who died some thirty years or more ago in England. A notice of the facts was sent to the direct heirs at the time, but from some cause the matter was not investigated. It is supposed the estate has long since reverted to the British Crown. In that case, could it be reclaimed? By answering these questions you will greatly oblige those who are interested in this matter." The English law of descent and inheritance would govern the case stated by you; and if there was no will to the contrary, the elder son would have taken the entire estate, at his father's death. As he did not take it in his lifetime, it descends to his heirs; and the descendants of the second son can have no claim to any portion of it, so long as any lineal descendant of the elder son survives. If the estate has reverted to the British Crown, it is not likely that it could be recovered; but as to that, you must consult some English lawyer who is learned in such matters. The chances are, however, that the estate long since went into the possession of some collateral heir, and is now enjoyed by that heir's descendants. In that case, it could be recovered, probably, in the course of twenty or thirty years, at an outlay of several hundred thousand dollars.

I. B. A. (Anamoza, Iowa) says: "I have been a reader of the *Ledger* for years, deriving my chief entertainment and instruction from your answers to correspondents. I have often been astonished at the directness and conciseness of your answers, as well as by the kindness and condescension which you show to all. My friend and I have a question which we have agreed to leave to your decision. When the Congress of the United States passed a law that a totally disabled private should receive a pension of eight dollars per month, my friend claims that our Government said, virtually, 'Poor fellow, you are worth twelve dollars and fifty cents, cash down, but as you are an improvident cuss, we will not trust you with the whole sum, but deal it out to you by an annuity of ninety-six dollars per annum.' This is on the supposition that the man is thirty years old. Now I claim that our country said no such thing; that inasmuch as the soldier owed his life to the service of his country, death would have been a payment of a just debt. Consequently, having paid less than his debt, the annuity or pension cannot be looked upon as a debt due the survivor, but as a mere gratuity from a grateful country to its brave defender." Your friend must be mistaken; because such language as he puts into the mouth of Government is not parliamentary, and it is well known that only the most pure and chaste phraseology is employed in Washington. Your view, on the other hand, is patriotic and highly poetical, and you have expressed it beautifully. We conclude it must be the right view, and we hope it is accepted by all the recipients of the pension.

ANXIOUS says: "I am a young man twenty years old; will be of age next June. I am attending school at present, but do not know whether it would be best to continue at school any longer than this year or not. I feel as if I want to be at work at something when I get to be my 'own man.' I have a tolerably fair common-school education, but am rather deficient in writing, as you see. I think I should like the telegraphing business pretty well. I have some taste for merchandising also, but do not think I have money enough to go into that branch of business. I have between $2,000 and $3,000, or will have that amount when I become of age. Now please tell me what to do. I am an orphan, and have no friends to go to, and I hope you will do me the favor of advising me as you have done others who have come to you for advice." When your present school term shall close, and your vacation begin, make up your mind what you would prefer to do for a living, and then go at it. If you determine to try the mercantile business, do not open a store on your own hook, nor go into partnership, but invest your money in government bonds, and take a clerkship, so that you can learn your business, before risking your money in it. By saving all you can, you will after a while have a nice capital, and will also know how to use it, and may go on prosperously. But if you rush into business at once, you will probably lose your money, and have to take a subordinate position in the end.

HAL ROWAN (Baltimore, Md.)—"I have been a constant reader of your valuable paper for some years. There is no part of it which I read with greater interest than your column of answers to correspondents, and have always found your answers valuable. I now come to you for advice in a matter that is very important to me. My case is this: I am afflicted with a restlessness of mind almost bordering on desperation. I find it impossible to read or study, not being able to keep the subject in mind. I am dependent on my own exertions for advancement in life, and unless I can recover control of my mind I am lost. I have applied myself to study with the greatest assiduity, thinking by such a course to gain control of my thinking powers. My efforts have been attended with no success. I am of sedentary habits, perfectly temperate, do not use tobacco, and am twenty-five years of age. You will confer a very great favor by advising me what course to pursue. I know you can advise me, if you will." If you are conscious that you have done the utmost you can do, we recommend you to consult an intelligent medical man. If he has known your family all the better. There may be some physical malady.

CHANGEABLE says: "I have been waiting upon a young lady a trifle over two years. I have enjoyed her company very much; but lately I met with another young lady whose company I enjoy more, and I like her much better. I made no engagement with the former, therefore I considered myself under no obligations to her. Of course I have deprived her of other company by my exclusive attentions, but can she not do as I did—find more desirable company? My friends think I am wrong, and I have decided to leave the matter to you, satisfied that your answer will be a just one." No doubt you are right in supposing that the young lady referred to could find "more desirable company" than yourself. If she could not, she must be living in a very poor neighborhood. Your treatment of her is unfair and dishonorable, according to your own statement; and if the young lady should give her version of the matter, you would probably appear in a still more odious light than you do on your own showing.

ROSE (New York) says: "I am a constant reader of your very interesting paper. I read the answers to correspondents every week. I thought, as I have never asked a question, perhaps you would answer this. In the *Ledger* of February 10, there was a piece headed, 'The Quarrels of Lovers.' There were two lines of poetry in the piece, namely:

"'Ruder words will soon rush in,
To spread the breach that words begin.'

Can you tell me, in your answers to correspondents, where I can get the rest of it?" The lines occur in Lalla Rookh, Thomas Moore's most popular poem, which you can find at any bookstore.

H. AND H. (Newark) say: "Two brothers who have for many years been admiring readers of your columns, differ in opinion with reference to St. Paul: one believing that he was married, and the other that he was not married. We appeal to your superior knowledge, and beg you to inform us which is correct, in your answers to correspondents." When he wrote his letters to the Corinthians he was not married, and considering how much "distress" existed, thought his condition the safer; but he alleges that as far as right is concerned, he might if he pleased be married as truly as others to whom he alludes. In his case he did not think marriage prudent.

IGNORANCE (Omaha, Neb.) says: "Having read your valuable paper for a number of years, I make bold to ask you a question or two for the first time, as follows: What is the use of the stereoscope? and what is the difference between it and the microscope?" A microscope magnifies small objects to the eye. A stereoscope enables one to look through two eye-glasses on photographs of one object, taken from different yet near points of view, so that the rays blending give the appearance to the eye of solidity in the object.

R. D. (Halifax, Va.) says: "I see in your Notices to Correspondents a reference to tin weddings. Will you please inform me, through the same source, what a tin wedding is? By so doing, you will greatly oblige a constant reader of your valuable paper, as we do not have such things down here in Virginia." A tin wedding is the celebration of the tenth anniversary of a wedding-day, as a silver wedding is the celebration of the twenty-fifth, and a golden wedding of the fiftieth anniversary of the same.

SUM ESSE (Fort Wayne, Mich.) says: "Will you please have the kindness to inform me, through the columns of your valuable paper, what work I can procure that will give me an insight into 'Mesmerism.' I take a great interest in all articles bearing upon the subject, and would like to make it a study." Carpenter's *Human Physiology*, and Holland's "Chapters on Mental Physiology." Read the article by DR. HALL on the fourth page of this number of the *Ledger*.

D. L. H. (Cleveland)—You are mistaken. We never published a story entitled, "Lady Ashleigh's Secret." Never pretend to be what you are not.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*